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Politics by Other Means: Rhizomes of Power in Argentina's Social Movements

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POLITICS BY OTHER MEANS: RHIZOMES OF POWER IN ARGENTINA'S SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

A Dissertation Presented

by

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DEDICATION

Para Jan, mi hijo, por su apoyo y paciencia

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ABSTRACT

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The focus of my research has been the reverberations of the 2001 Argentine economic crisis, as they affected and were responded to by women in social movements. This dissertation contributes to studies of globalization by highlighting the unintended consequences of neoliberalism in Argentina in the form of the collective empowerment of women in egalitarian social movements. The negative consequences of neoliberalism are well known, but I found that these policies produced more than misery. They also helped to stimulate a new kind of politics —a set of autonomous movements aimed at democratizing society as well as the state. In response to rapidly deteriorating living conditions, contemporary Argentine social movements organized their constituencies in what I have defined as the field of politics by other means. In the context of failed governmental programs and discourse designed to create docile, mobile subjects (governmentality), egalitarian social movements engaged in the creation of social movements whose democratic structures contrasted with the dispossessing nature of the neoliberal global power they confronted. In Argentina, this new political culture and methodology fostered, through street theater and pageants, 'other means' of making

politics, including a concern for internal gender democracy in what has been called the "solidarity economy." My research suggests that struggles against gender inequities have a synergistic relationship to democratic political structures. I found that receptivity to feminist discourses and opportunities for women's participation were greater in anti-hierarchical opposition movements than in those with a more traditional leftist orientation. In these autonomous movements, women were able to challenge gender inequities, democratizing both the movements and their family relationships. Their struggle for democracy and freedom contrasts with the role of neoliberal policies and practices responsible for the weakening of democratic institutions in Argentina. In this way, my research not only broadens understanding of Argentina's crisis and recovery, but it raises questions about the implications of the present worldwide economic and social crisis on struggles to transform gender relations.

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CHAPTER I

POLITICS BY OTHER MEANS: RHIZOMES OF POWER IN ARGENTINA'S SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Introduction

Fire on the national highway. Stones, rain, asphalt. Guards in riot gear. Masked men, women and children in rags. Stones and sticks against lead bullets. Juan, Uberlinda's fifteen year-old, threw stones with amazing aim. They banged against the acrylic shield that protected the faces of the guards. All of them masked. The National Guard charged. From behind the burning tires, Uberlinda took aim. The molotov described an almost perfect arch on the dark sky. For a second, it lit up a war scene and then it was all fire and pain. Later, the police station, dirty and small. Uberlinda and many women: sweat, anger and, for the first time, compañeras to break bread with (Monteagudo 2007).

Argentina, the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) poster child of the 1990s, collapsed in December 2001 and defaulted on its 144,000 million dollar debt. Throughout this time, over half of the population dropped below the poverty line, and almost a quarter became unemployed. These structural conditions led to a number of popular responses, which included an important presence of women in roadblocks organized by unemployed worker movements (the "piqueterxs[iii]"), the take over of bankrupted factories by workers, as well as an important number of middle class people joining grassroots popular assembly organizations. Just like Uberlinda, a "piquetera" in the South of Argentina, Argentine women (and men) defied neoliberalism by collectively organizing in largely egalitarian ways to defend their families and lifestyles from local and global (glocal) forces that threatened them. Building on my experiences as an

activist born and raised in Argentina, I focused my academic research on the prefigurative social movements (Breines 1988) that appeared around that time, movements that unlike the organizations of the 1970s, were not interested in preparing for the revolution that would take place after taking over the State, but rather enacted the changes they wanted within their own organizations, in the here and now, through non-hierarchical, non-centralized movements. Their organizations lacked in the hierarchical structures of political parties, as they were seeking a society without hierarchies. Their solidarity economy projects were egalitarian enterprises geared to fulfilling their constituencies' needs, rather than to producing profit. Their activism opened spaces for women to break free of domestic bonds and join the struggle for social change, as they were interested in the collective empowement of all. Through their organizing, they were able to build power by creating egalitarian communities that connected with each other, increasing their power and allowing them to grow outside of their own territories[iii].

Following Sonia Alvarez, Evelina Dagnino and Arturo Escobar (1998), and building on Giles Deleuze (2008a), I think of social movements and networks as rhizomes of power that can connect with each other, expand their influence, and at times, unfortunately, segment through movement's splits. Indeed, the social movements of my research organized through nodes ("nodos") of rhizomatic connections[iv]. Enrique, an intellectual who co-founded one of these spaces, Multitudes, explains that the political culture of the late eighties, in the years after the dictatorship, was a "resaca" (hang over) from the seventies militaristic, hierarchical and masculinist politics. It is a well-known fact that popular organizations of the seventies lacked in internal democracy (Stahler-Sholk et al. 2008; Schmukler 1995). Since then, however, politics have become more

horizontal, with a tendency to non-hierarchy and a concern for gender balance. My research questions were prompted by this change, reflected in the organizing structures of the different social movements that appeared during the nineties and early 2000s. I realized that these changes, embodied in thousands of activists and participants, had led to the constitutions of a new field of politics and protest.

Following Michel Foucault's conception of politics as the continuation of war by other means (Foucault 2003a: 15-19)[v], I analyze the appearance, during the late nineties, of a field of prefigurative, egalitarian politics, a field that I define as that of "politics by other means". In Argentina, both the deployment of globalization and its resistance bear the signs of war: a war waged against the population, to which sectors of the population responded by strengthening pre-existing social and political networks, as they created social movements that engaged in direct actions that challenged neoliberalism. After years of frustrating traditional protesting while the country plunged deeper and deeper into poverty, these social movements not only organized through non-hierarchical structures, but also engaged in untamed[vi] direct actions that introduced novel practices of protesting by pushing the boundaries of what were acceptable ways to manifest dissent. Roadblocks, "escraches[vii]", and street theater were used when marches, rallies, and strikes proved ineffective to change the social, economic, and political disaster that followed the application of the IMF structural adjustment policies. As neoliberalism weakened State institutions in the Global South and political parties and unions suffered a significant loss of legitimacy (Villalon 2008) due to their inefficacy in solving the dire issues caused by neoliberalism, social movements were impacted by the participation of feminist women in the popular assembly movement (Schmukler 2007) and the Encuentros Nacionales de

Mujeres[viii] (Encuentros from now on) . This movement shared with the Encuentros their lack of hierarchical organization of their power structures. The way they envisioned power, hierarchy, and politics was influenced, as well, by twenty-first century Zapatismo (Vommaro 2003) and the World Social Forum that provided the possibility to articulate and coordinate different global movements, as former Trotskyist, Communists, and Guevarists, impacted by the fall of the Soviet Union, articulated a collective critique of their own past vanguardism while they participated in the popular assembly and unemployed worker movement.

Thus, social movements that eschewed traditional politics, sprung up in the Argentine public spheres by holding roadblocks (sometimes for weeks on end), taking over and recovering abandoned factories, or meeting by the hundreds on street corners to discuss actions to confront the crisis. I argue that the appearance of these untamed, creative social movements is an unintended consequence of neoliberal policies and practices that weakened democratic institutions in the Global South, leaving in their trail not only impoverished and unemployed people, but also a population that learned that normal, tamed democratic channels to solve dire social problems are useless.

While the negative impact of neoliberalism in the Global South has been widely researched[ix], its unintended consequences remain relatively obscure in the literature[x]. My research will cover a gap in these studies, as it is concerned with the creation of material and discursive alternatives to neoliberalism. Indeed, in opposition to the dispossessing policies that characterize neoliberalism, many of these organizations engaged in practices of solidarity economy constituting "Redes de Economías Alternativas" (Alternative Economic Webs) based on the radical solidarity principle of justice (Ferguson 2008) —to

each according to needs, from each according to abilities (Marx [1875] 1986). Women, at the forefront of the struggle against poverty and unemployment engaged in the creation and support of a myriad of social organizations, including not only spaces to take care of children, feed the hungry, and obtain health care (Schmukler 1995), but also solidarity economy projects. These movements harnessed the material energy of the participants in the "Proyectos Productivos" (egalitarian microenterprises of the unemployed working and middle classes) (PPs from now on) and the recovered factories (bankrupted corporations turned into workers' cooperatives). This material energy was compounded by the affective energy that stemmed from the interactions between a diversity of participants. These processes were characterized by collective decision making, which allowed for new performances of power, solidarity economic projects, direct actions, and meanings that were articulated with their structural situation through a deep engagement with politics of affects (Jaspers 1998; Collins 2001; Gould 2009; Goodwin et al. 2001; Berezin 2001; Barker 2001; Irvine 2002). Guided by solidarity, these movements sought to improve not only the material aspects of their constituencies lives, but also their affects, as they gave impulse to constructions where people's emotional lives were as important as their economic situations. Their focus on affects is consistent with their political praxis, as their movements became spaces of contention and negotiation of gender and democracy. The new emotions and bonds that stemmed out of this praxis, framed within a number of local and international issues, were the driving force that allowed for the creation of egalitarian institutions. Considering that Argentina's cultural processes were still male dominated for the most part, what battles did these women give to access leadership roles within their organizations? What were the discursive and

material resources available to them in their quest to empower themselves? To what extent were men involved in this change?

I contrast these autonomous power constructions through which social movements connect with each other through horizontal, non-hierarchized rhizomatic (Deleuze and Guattari 2008a) networks with the heteronomous (non-autonomous) (Castoriadis 1993) constructions of power by state brokers ("punteros") who manage welfare plans and with leftist centralized political parties that control unemployed workers for partisan political ends.

Building on the contacts and friendship established earlier on with many activist communities in Argentina from 2002 to 2009 I engaged in a multi-sited (Marcus 1995) in-depth ethnography. I first researched, and collaborated with the Movimiento de Trabajadores Desempleados Anibal Verón (MTD Anibal Verón) (Svampa and Pereyra 2003; Vommaro 2008, 2003; Verón 2004; Solano and Situaciones 2002; Situaciones 2002a; Nowhere 2003a; Delamata 2005; Monteagudo 2007; Grammático 2010; López Echagüe 2002; Burkart and Vázquez 2008)**,** an unemployed worker movement of movements where approximately 2,000 working class families organized to survive in urban landscapes of poverty, exclusion, and despair. Almost at the same time, I started researching the movements of factories under worker control (Almeyra 2004; Vieta 2009; Ruggeri 2005a; Monteagudo 2008; Fernandez 2006; Echaide 2004; Fajn 2003; Heller 2004; Korol 2005; Magnani 2003; Mohamad 2006; Rebon 2006; Ruggeri 2005b, 2009; Trinchero et al. 2009; Lavaca 2004) which re-created jobs for more than 10,000 people in a move that not only challenged notions of private property and social responsibility, but also proved that without overgrown management these —for the most part small

corporations— were viable if managed through solidarity principles. Later I became acquainted with the Asamblea Popular Ambiental de Gualeguaychú (ACAG) (Toller 2009), a multiclass assembly of thousands of citizens of a rural town in Argentina that opposed the installation of a Finnish pulp (paper) mill across the river this Argentine town shares with Uruguay. The final stage of my research was devoted to gathering data from a number of social movements whose genealogy can be traced back to the popular assembly movement of the early 2000s: small organizations, such as La Olla, the Mesa de Escrache, and La Sala, with 10-30 middle class people involved fulltime; Multitudes, an intellectual-activist space with approximately 30 middle class activists and the Union de Asambleas Ciudadanas (UAC) Regional Buenos Aires with less than 20 middle class and working class people in their membership. My research also involved the Marcha de Antorchas, a small organization of 20 members, who protested government neglect over the flooding of their city of Santa Fe.

As I was doing this research, I participated in numerous road blockades, "escraches", collaborated with PPs, popular assemblies, and organic gardens. I participated, as well, in formal and informal meetings of networks of diverse social movements. My research has also involved working for a month in a recovered factory with 30 employees, and organizing street theater with different social movements in Argentina. In this way, as I researched how women articulated their personal lives with their structural situation, I have observed how gender was made across an important number of contemporary Argentine social movements. While women constituted the majority of those who first began organizing roadblocks, by the time I began my research there were equal numbers of women and men involved. However, women were in charge

of most of the "domestic" chores of the organizations (cooking, caring for children, arranging transportation, managing welfare plans), while men were, for the most part, in charge of addressing the press and talking with the government. In general, the recovered factory movement followed a similar pattern (Monteagudo 2009), with a few exceptions which included La Nueva Esperanza, as I could observe during my visits and while working there. The ACAG presented a similar genderized division of labor. On the other hand, smaller organizations such as the Mesa, la Olla, and La Sala had been able to de-genderize their tasks, although only one (reluctant) man talks publicly at La Olla's monthly street interventions. Although smaller movements present balanced gender structures, I questioned whether it was the size of the movement that explained their interest in democratic gender relations. I asked myself if this difference could be explained, rather, through the "sidestreaming" (Alvarez 2009) of feminisms. Sonia Alvarez researches how feminism has been "spreading horizontally into a wide array of class, ethnic communities, and social and cultural spaces, including parallel social movement publics" (Alvarez 2009). Were feminism sidestreamed into the smaller movements? How did this happen, and what were the reasons behind the lack of feminist discourse in other, bigger organizations?

Neoliberal Catastrophe

The appearance of politics by other means in Argentina is the result of a complex configuration of structural, political, social, and subjective issues that clashed with neoliberal economic and social policies. Until 1970, and before the military dictatorship that allowed for the IMF's intervention by causing the disappearance of 30,000 activists who opposed their practices, Argentina had only nine percent of its population below the

poverty line (McCaughan 2002). After the introduction of the structural adjustment, through which all the nationally owned enterprises were sold to foreign capital and the national industry was destroyed as a result of unrestricted imports from countries with lax labor legislation, unemployment —at four percent in the 1970s (McCaughan 2002)— rose to unprecedented levels (Fajn 2003:14-20), reaching 22 percent (PNUD 2002), while 53 percent of the population plunged below the poverty line (PNUD 2002). The economic model of the 1950s, based on the manufacturing industry and agriculture, had been replaced by a model based on services, and international speculation, dominated by financial capital and deeply dependent on foreign loans (Arisó 2002).

David Harvey defines neoliberalism as a political class project of "accumulation by dispossession" (Harvey 2005) achieved through structural adjustment, a process plagued by illegal deals, bribes, corruption and favoritism (Stokes 2003, Helmke and Levitsky 2003, Auyero 2000, (O'Donnell 1997). The manifested aim of neoliberalism is to ensure that individuals' entrepreneurial skills are liberated from the surveillance of the State. At the core of its precepts, neoliberalism is strongly connected with free markets (Bourdieu 1998), free trade, and property rights, where the role of the State must be limited to guaranteeing the "quality and integrity of money" and the repressive and legal structures that guarantee the functioning of the markets (Harvey 2005). Foucault clarifies this by explaining that neoliberalism should not be "identified with laissez-faire, but rather with permanent vigilance, activity, and intervention" (Foucault 2008). This intervention, however, leaves out economic intervention guaranteeing in this way the freedom of the markets. However, neoliberal States are heavily invested in what Foucault names "legal interventions", as the State needs to create and guarantee the proper

structures that will enable the market to operate with freedom and efficiency. Thus, neoliberalism entails a "minimum of economic interventionism, and a maximum legal interventionism" (Foucault 2008).

Neoliberal policies that were implemented to guarantee the "freedom of the markets" developed in uneven, ethnized, and genderized ways throughout the globe. Although David Harvey, Immanuel Wallerstein (2004), and the Comaroffs (2001) see neoliberalism as a system that has extended all over the world —an all encompassing hegemonic project— Aihwa Ong (2006) and Ana Tsing (2005) define it rather as sets of practices that are unequally deployed across the globe. For Ong, neoliberalism is a set of technologies of government (Ong 2006) that when deployed in localized spaces creates friction between the global and the local (Tsing 2005) through cultural practices implemented in historically, geographic specific ways. Rather than an all encompassing project that starts at the center and flows to the margins as in Harvey's (2005) analysis, in Tsing and Ong's conceptualization, neoliberalism is unevenly deployed across the globe. As multinational capital flows into the Global South, supported by laws and regulations that protect it but not the local population, it collides with the social movements that oppose it, at the same time that it creates new scenarios for interregional stress.

This stress manifested itself violently during the early implementation of neoliberal interventions during the seventies as the Argentine and most of Latin America states featured, most prominently, its repressive side. From 1976 to 1983, the Argentine State conducted a massacre of those who were opposed to neoliberal economic policies. Thus, the Argentine people emerged from the terror of the dictatorship with a different vision of what the State and its institutions were. No longer there to protect the

population, the State became, under the Juntas, a terror machine that destroyed dissenting citizens. Brutal performances of State terror created a deeply ingrained distrust in the institutions, which increased as the IMF continued to dictate State policies after the dictatorship. The role of the corrupt Congress and the sold-out Executive during the Menem administrations contributed to the loss of trust in governments that seemed to work only as managers of the IMF.

As the economy finally collapsed in 2001, the "Que se Vayan Todos" (Throw Them All Out) chant of the masses that flooded the streets of Argentina gave voice to this deep disillusion in electoral politics and its institutions. Following the defeat of the powerful human rights movements of the eighties, when the institutions of democracy could not protect its citizens, these citizens protected themselves. Although local experiences had a strong influence on these activists' vision of how to struggle for social change, international events were also part of the process through which a new field came to be. As Luis Zamora, an ex-Trotskyist now involved with the UAC explained: "The fall of the Soviet Union left a huge void in the world, even for those of us who considered its demise as an opportunity to develop a different approach to politics." Impacted by the fall of the hypercentralized Soviet Union, they turned their attention to the Zapatistas in Chiapas. As Norberto with La Olla explained, "Shortly after the Zapatista uprising, a number of activists created different groups influenced by their decentralized, autonomous experience."

Following on the Zapatistas steps, these activists attempted to create autonomous, decentralized social movements. Abhorring of a State that had turned against them during the dictatorship and throughout the implementation of neoliberal plans during the

nineties, instead of putting pressure on State institutions that did not respond to their needs, they decided to put pressure on the individuals behind those institutions. Having experienced the defeat of the human rights movements, led by the Madres de Plaza de Mayo and different political parties, these activists decided to try new tactics and organizational strategies. Thus, social movements engaged in "escraches" and other direct actions as they linked the pain of their own lives with the actions of those responsible for neoliberal practices: government officials, military personnel, and civilians connected with the dictatorship. While neoliberalism puts life itself into question in the Global South, so do social movements, which stop the constant and necessary movement of life by engaging in this low intensity, largely peaceful warfare, in what has become the most predominant resource in the struggle against neoliberalism.

The "Human Mask" of the Catastrophe

The social actors of my study, if not altogether stopping neoliberalism, can be credited with altering its course, forcing changes, advancing democracy, and even overthrowing corrupted national governments (Stahler-Sholk 2008:2). To achieve this change, these social movements had to resignify a number of neoliberal practices that tended to isolate them by driving them out of the highways and back into their own homes. As we will see, following the application of the structural adjustment "shock therapy" (Klein 2007), masses of unemployed workers blockading roads pushed neoliberalism to a second stage (Molyneux 2007)[xi], as the brutal adjustment with no safety nets was followed by an adjustment with a minimum of care for the human population.

During the early or first stage of neoliberalism, as factories closed down and masses of people became unemployed, citizens were expected to just buckle up and hope for improvement to follow these harsh, but allegedly necessary drastic economic decisions. Stage one (1970s to mid-nineties) was characterized by an extreme deployment of privatizations that amounted to the application of a shock therapy (Klein 2007). As masses became unemployed, plunging below the poverty line, social movements responded with direct actions that threatened to paralyze the country. Jeff Goodwin and James Jasper[xii] (2004) raise the objection that an analysis of political opportunity structures leaves out cultural specificities that are central to an analysis of social movements. As Goodman and Jasper argue, the model of political opportunities focuses on structural conditions for mobilizations but does not take into account that social actors and their collective actions are sometimes the reason why new structures come into play, such as with the implementation of the plan Jefes y Jefas de Familia (welfare plan for the unemployed) in Argentina. To this end, it is useful to remember that technologies of government "arise out of a complex field of contestation" (Rose 1999) which signals to its historic origins —the result of specific moments in history where policy and strategies were implemented to respond to movements aiming at societal change. It is out of the resistance and subversion of social movements that different techniques such as this and other welfare plans for the unemployed in Argentina were implemented.

As a response to this resistance, stage two was launched, characterized by an effort to aid individuals through welfare/work programs, as well as to help them build social capital through programs designed to teach new abilities that would aid them in

getting jobs, or other survival skills, such as how to plant edibles in small urban yards. Although this stage has been named "neoliberalism with a human face" (Cornia 1987), I argue that there was no human face in this second stage, but rather a human mask, as problems were not solved, but instead hidden, as the policies of exclusion practiced by neoliberal governments were not addressed. Rather, the blame for their situation was placed on the individuals themselves. While all along neoliberal mentality privileges isolated individuals who can make their way through the market on their own, after the initial shock therapy of privatizations that rendered masses of people unemployed without any kind of safety net, came a push to help individuals build skills that will deliver them through the uncertainties of the markets. This social catastrophe, brought on by neoliberal economic policies and practices, is, thus, construed as the fault of the individual who does not have enough social capital.

True to their own philosophy, neoliberal practitioners envisioned this remedial process as the accumulation of social capital without the aid of the State. As individuals should take care of themselves, it was up to civil society to come up with strategies to build social capital. Thus, in Argentina stage two was characterized by the prominent role of mainstream Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) that developed programs to help individuals to succeed in the market without the support of the State, and to keep them away from organizing roadblocks and participating in social movements that organized them. In this way, citizens became active participants in the project of developing their own capital (Hyatt 2001) outside of social movements that posed a problem for the government. Indeed, as by 1996 the situation in the country became increasingly contentious, with "puebladas[xiii]" (town revolts) and road blockades that

lasted sometimes for days on end, the Carlos Menem administration (1989-1999) implemented the first welfare plans (Delamata 2004: 22) which were first allocated exclusively through the municipalities. However the De La Rua administration (1999-2001) introduced a dramatic change in the allocations of the plans —a modification that would have portentous consequences in Argentine politics. Following neoliberal doctrine that abhors State efforts to support unemployed workers (Foucault 2008) De La Rua's welfare plans were allocated to NGOs (Delamata 2004: 23-24). Soon, hundreds of unemployed worker organizations created their own NGOs[xiv] and were managing approximately 10-15 percent of the plans independently from the municipalities (Delamata 2004) and the individualist, exploitative and demobilizing logic of the "punteros". The "punteros" are middlemen (and a few women) who have fluid contacts with the Partido Justicialista (PJ) and to a lesser extent with the Unión Cívica Radical (UCR)[xv] that act as State brokers. The "punteros" have traditionally been important in connecting the working class with power and constituted the base upon which Peronism exerted its influence and control over the population. Although always connected with access to welfare, in the mid-nineties poor people could access material resources including welfare plans, housing, medicines, clothes, and food through them. In exchange for helping people access these resources, the "puntero" expects those who receive the benefit to comply with a number of actions, which include attendance to PJ's political acts, as well as, in the case of recipients of welfare plans, to work 20 hours a week in whatever task the "puntero" dictates. When the recipient fails to comply with this, his welfare plan is canceled.

This twenty hours of work a week in exchange for approximately $50.00 a month, is consistent with neoliberal philosophy that mandates that when welfare becomes unavoidable it should look like work (Rose 1999). Foucault (Foucault 2008) explains that neoliberal philosophy is based on the idea that the State should only intervene to guarantee the functioning of the markets. Thus, direct support to those unemployed would amount to the State interfering with the market's needs for labor. However, if welfare looks like work, then those on welfare can be counted as workers, something that the Argentine government was not shy to do, although counting unemployed workers as employed might seem contradictory. Indeed, to access the welfare plan, the subject had to be unemployed, but, since she is the recipient of not only a small amount of money, but is also asked to perform labor in exchange, her situation is no longer that of an unemployed worker but rather that of a worker with a low income. In Foucault terms her situation is that of an individual between two productive activities (Foucault 2008) performing a not-so-productive activity at the time, but definitely not just a passive recipient of welfare.

Genealogy of Politics by Other Means

During the eighties Latin America developed a diversity of social movements that questioned the economic and social neoliberal model implemented in the region (Alvarez et al. 1998). In Argentina, in particular, the genealogy[xvi] of the field of politics by other means can be traced to the mid and late nineties, a complicated and chaotic period during which the Argentine population began to feel the effects of the structural adjustment model of the IMF as neoliberalism stormed throughout the region in the wake of the military dictatorships that paved its way. Structural adjustment measures were

characterized by a slashing of social spending, and the privatization of State property (Laurell 2000), as well as import policies that caused the destruction of the national industry with subsequent high levels of unemployment and brutal poverty. Although neoliberalism had its moment of hegemony in the early 1990s, when the economic and social situation became untenable in the late 1990s, critical discourses were re-legitimized as social movements engaged in massive direct actions that challenged the previous submission to the Washington consensus (Svampa 2008)[xvii].

These movements confronted neoliberalism in its first and second stage. While the first stage, characterized by exclusion and dispossession, was confronted mainly through untamed direct actions that made circulation of goods impossible through roadblocks, the second stage, with its human mask, presented a different challenge. The human mask of this stage was presented through governmentality: an art of government, a complex "dispositif[xviii]" of discourse and practices developed through "multiform tactics" (Foucault 1991) primarily by governments, with support of mainstream NGOs, scientific and media discourse, unions, and other civil society organizations. As Bárbara Cruikshank explains, these multiform tactics are aimed at guiding and shaping (rather than forcing) the actions of others (Cruishank 1999). Through the implementation of work/welfare programs, Argentine governments invested efforts in the creation of active, self-supported mobile subjects: the entrepreneurs of the self (Rose and Miller 1992) that should self-discipline to endure the high unemployment rates and poverty that neoliberal economic and cultural policies generated.

Unemployed workers were expected to clear the highways of roadblocks in order to receive a meager subsidy in return for their labor. But while most unemployed

workers who received this benefit performed their required labor under the supervision and direction of the majors of their towns, or bribed a "puntero" and did not have to work, the unemployed worker movements of my study collectively decided what kind of work would be performed with the aim of learning the skills and creating a solidarity market that would enable them to eventually leave the plans behind. Some of the unemployed worker organizations, including most prominently the Movimiento de Trabajadores Desocupados Anibal Verón (MTD Aníbal Verón) were able to turn this twisted practice around by defining collectively, autonomously from the State, what work would be done in exchange for the miserly amount of money they received. In that way, they used the labor required by the State to build their own meeting centers, bakeries, organic gardens, and to perform other tasks that were necessary for the organization. This constitutes an important example of how Argentine social movements challenged govermentality. As they focused on work that would make life better for people in their own territories, their efforts were devoted to creating practices of solidarity by establishing non-capitalist relations of production (Gibson-Graham 1996).

I am particularly interested in exploring how this organizational style encourage the appearance of radical, non-hegemonizing feminine and masculine performances of power[xix], embodied in radical, non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities. These subjectivities do not necessarily correspond to certain personalities, or social classes. These performances traverse social classes, as they are present in the field of politics by other means in middle class popular assembly originated movements, unemployed worker organizations, and to a certain extent, in the recovered factory movement as well. Radical, non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities

are subjectivities constructed within egalitarian social movements. Guided by the principle of power-with (Ferguson 2009)[xx], these performances result in an enhanced democracy within the movements themselves. Women and men who embody these subjectivities are not interested in building power by dominating others. In their most lucid moments, these women and men do not talk over others in meetings, do not shut others up when in disagreement, are capable of holding their peace in the face of repression, and can establish rhizomatic, non-hierarchical connections with similar oriented movements. Their capacity to open their own spaces to other groups has enabled them to increase the collective power of the field. While power-over is the oppression of others to satisfy personal aims, power-with is a collective effort to build power, a positive conception of power that implies community to increase the group's ability to produce social change as opposed to a conception of power as domination.

These performances are the result of a number of factors including a widespread sense of disillusion with hierarchical structures such as the State, political parties and unions which led social movement actors to experience a profound change in their conceptions of power and politics at the same time that changes in the mode of production (Hardt 2000) under neoliberal capitalism called for a shift in conceptualizations of social change. In the industrialized countries, the global displacement of the manufacturing industry by the service industry rendered obsolete the idea of the proletariat as the head of the revolution as the industrial proletariat was no longer the class that held the switch to altogether stop production[xxi].

In Argentina, the articulation of globalization was different than in the industrialized nations, were Michael Hardt and Toni Negri are mainly focusing their

thinking (Hardt 2000). In the Global North, the growth of the service industry, as well as off sourcing, explains the loss of importance of the manufacturing industry. In Argentina, however, the industrial proletariat's numbers diminished greatly as a consequence of the destruction of the national industry that followed the application of structural adjustment plans. Thus, at least partially as a consequence of neoliberally induced massive unemployment, during the nineties, unemployed worker organizations sprung up throughout the country, as neoliberal policies destroyed the national industry through unrestricted global imports. Unions and leftist political parties were ineffectual in stopping this process, which ended up with abandoned factories, masses of unemployed workers, and the impoverishment of the middle classes. Argentina's industrialized mode of production changed during neoliberalism to a similar mode of production that existed before Perón's industrializing effort, becoming, once more, a global provider for "cheap nature". Genetically modified crops and underground resources were exploited by international agribusiness and mega mining corporations —the latter benefitting from extraordinarily generous deals[xxii] obtained during the structural adjustment process in the early nineties which were not modified by the administrations that followed. The IMF and the Menem administration presented this scenario as the only way Argentina could successfully join the Twenty-First Century. However, factories were taken over by workers and production and commercialization proved possible in this post-bankrupted corporations.

While a small sector of the working class[xxiii] engaged in the take-over of bankrupted means of production, the massification of welfare-work plans allocated to NGOs during the De La Rua administration (Delamata 2005) created a socio-political

field that soon came under dispute by a number of organizations. While most of these organizations engaged in clientelistic politics, responding to different sectors of Peronism, others constituted unemployed sectors of leftist political parties. However, a minority of unemployed worker organizations experimented with non-hierarchical, solidarity economy projects, sustained by prefigurative social movements that presented a challenge to neoliberal governmentality (Foucault 2008). Governmentality was challenged by these movements through practices of power-with, as they effectively applied the radical solidarity principle of justice (Ferguson 2008)[xxiv] —the ordering force of their egalitarian organizing tactics.

With the idea of a violent take-over of the bourgeois State fading away, both due to disillusion with the State itself and the fall of the Soviet Union (which had been a source of inspiration for many leftist organizations) these movements focused instead on autonomist practices aimed at collectively building power through non-hierarchical practices, manifesting in this way their conscious critique of the shortcomings of the hierarchically centralized Soviet Union, as well the influence of Zapatismo's successful decentralization of power structures.

Like the Zapatistas, and as a response to the global and local force-relations that oppress them, the movements of my research[xxv] often engage in untamed direct actions, described by David Graeber as "peaceful warfare[xxvi]" (Graeber 2003), similar to those embodied by prefigurative movements in the anti-corporate globalization movement in the north of America and in Europe (Solnit 2004; Nowhere 2003b), and in the Zapatistas in Chiapas, Mexico (Holloway and Pelaez 1998; Millan 2006; Cleaver 1998; Collier and Lowery Quaratiello 2005). This tendency to direct actions whose untamed nature pushed

the boundaries of what was acceptable in politics and protest, as well as a concern for their own territory, is also shared by many other contemporary Latin American social movements (Svampa 2008), such as the Brazilian Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem-Terra (Movement of Landless Rural Workers) (Navarro 2006; Martins de Carvalho 2006), the Ecuadorian indigenous social movements (Larrea 2006), as well as the indigenous and urban movements of Bolivia (Tapia 2006; Archondo 2006)[xxvii]. However, I constrain my analysis to the movements within what I have defined as the field of politics by other means. This is a space where actions are embodied in prefigurative movements, with a concern for their own territory, an interest in gender balance and non-hierarchical, rhizomatic connections that, operating through the principle of power-with, allow these movements to grow in numbers without diminishing the power of other popular organizations.

Many of their actions can be interpreted as enactments of prefigurative justice, especially the "escraches" to the private lives of those deemed as agents of neoliberalism. As the participants in these movements are committed to pursuing a society without hierarchies and free of exploitation, their power structure reflects their philosophy, which explains their abhorrence of any kind of centralization in their decision-making processes[xxviii]. This commitment to egalitarian practices explains the prefigurative aspects of their movement, as well as their concern for integrating their politics and their personal lives. Prefigurative politics allow, or perhaps even demand that they integrate their personal pain into their activism against the consequences of globalization. Thus, while road blockades stop the flow of life, the "escraches" involve interfering with the private lives of politicians, military or police personnel, in an attempt to socially isolate

the individual viewed responsible for designing and implementing neoliberal practices that seriously impact the lives of the protestors. I analyze the "escraches" as prefigurative justice aimed at the "civil death" of the "escrachado" (the person object of an "escrache"). Indeed, the protestors' objective is to effectively isolate this person from his neighbors, and alert all of society that a dangerous individual is free and walking the streets. While Argentina's justice can be slow and sometimes never reach powerful individuals, prefigurative justice creates the conditions to isolate individuals from their social environment.

These prefigurative social movements spearheaded the contentious process of reclaiming their own energies through structures that engaged in a radical redistribution of resources and allocation of labor (the radical solidarity principle of justice mentioned above). At the same time, they elaborated demands of autonomy from the State, political parties, churches, and unions. In this way, they built organizations with non-hierarchical and non-centralized decision making processes, based on assemblies of all members. Given their commitment to non-hierarchical politics, these movements are not interested in creating cadres and leaders. They understand that leaders and cadres empower themselves over the community, as they take on the roles of the enlightened. The issue of power concentrated in the hands of leaders has many facets, one of them that of the potential of losing that leader through repression. On June 26, 2002, the police of the province of Buenos Aires attacked a massive roadblockade organized by the Coordinadora Aníbal Verón (CAV from now on), killing two people and injuring hundreds. One of the dead was Darío Santillán, a 21 year old "referente" (somebody that people seek for guidance) of the CAV. The unemployed workers in the CAV commented

that they felt the death of Darío in many ways, both personal and political. However, "Darío was not a leader, but rather a 'referente'. This is why his death at the "Masacre de Avellaneda" (the Massacre from now on) was not a crippling blow to our organization," one of the MTD members explained. If Darío had instead been a leader, he would have concentrated so much power that his death would have left the movement disorganizedxxix.

As many of the "referentes" of the field elaborated on a critique of the hierarchical nature of the leftist centralized political parties where many of them had their start in popular politics, they created movements by creating power, rather than by taking it away from other organizations, as in the common practice of centralized leftist political parties in Argentina. Their power was the result of the new experiences, connections, ideas, and emotions that participation in non-capitalist spaces of production within non-hierarchical, prefigurative social movements brought around. Participation in these spaces constituted a paramount experience for women, especially working class women who had the opportunity, sometimes for the first time, to engage in an autonomous political activity that encompassed the economic, political, social, and affective aspects of their lives.

Femininity and Feminisms in the Rhizome

The women's movement, isolated from popular organizations during the transition to democracy, as gender issues were shunned by traditional political parties, took on a popular role as women started organizing against hunger and despair in the poor neighborhoods of Argentina (Schmukler 1995). Although women had been present in politics and protest in Argentina for a long time, it was not until the appearance of the

Madres de Plaza de Mayo in the late seventies, that women acquired leadership roles in the struggles for social change. Previously, women, especially in the Unión Cívica Radical (UCR) and the Peronist movement, but also within the left, had held secondary roles, exemplified in Evita's figure[xxx]. Although Evita has been credited with early Peronism's effectiveness in connecting with the masses (Navarro 1982) as she was able to mobilize single handedly thousands of people, she maintained that she was herself the heart of the movement, while Perón was its thinking head (Schmukler 1995; Sutton 2010). Moreover, although Peronism allowed for women to vote for the first time, women joined the party not to solve their gender issues, but rather to help with the construction of the party (Schmukler 1995). Indeed, Peronism incorporated women into the public life as if the public spheres were a continuation of the gender roles prevalent in the private spheres at the time (Grammático 2010). Women's "natural" roles of mothers and caregivers were portrayed as the foundation of the "Peronist" nation.

These women joined the Peronist movement[xxxi] in the late forties, at a time when Argentina was benefitting from a welfare State. However, during the nineties, this State all but disappeared as unemployment rose and the population plunged below the poverty line. Women whose children were hungry were the first to start organizing roadblocks and other direct actions (Andújar 2005) seeking solutions to structural issues that were beyond their control. Due to the loss of legitimacy of political parties, women organized within non-governmental organizations and social movements (Schmukler 1995). At the same time that working class women organized roadblocks, middle class women, some of them active in the feminist movement participated in the popular assembly movement that developed in the main cities of Argentina. Although feminism was relatively

isolated from popular struggles, since 1986 middle class women have organized the above mentioned annual Encuentro, and, as the economic situation continued to deteriorate, in 1997 "piqueteras" and women in the recovered factories started to join them (Alma and Lorenzo 2009) through the different social movements and political parties that had been present in the Encuentros since its creation: peronists, feminists, socialists, communists, women from human rights organization, Catholics, popular conservatives, and liberals (Sánchez 2009-2010).

The massive participation of working class women in the Encuentros has been linked with what authors have named the "feminization of resistance" (Borland and Sutton 2007; Korol 2004), as for the first time there was an important presence of women in direct actions, including roadblocks and "escraches". The feminization of resistance[xxxii] followed the "feminization of poverty" as neoliberal economics had gendered effects on the population, affecting, especially, working-class and impoverished women from the middle sectors (Birgin 2000). In 2002, approximately 20 percent of the households with children had a single parent, a woman, while over half of the female population was living below the poverty line (SIEMPRO: Sistema de Evaluación 2003).

As most women in these organizations had been for the most part confined to their family lives, their participation in these social movements meant that they could now meet with other women and men whose life experiences were different from their own. As my findings suggest, these practices also allowed for some women to empower themselves within the organization. As in many egalitarian structures, women who can control the production and distribution of resources can exert more power than those who do not. Perhaps more importantly, participating in these spaces of production, which

generated access to critical resources, allowed women to meet with other women, gain autonomy and have a life outside their own domestic, family lives (Rifkin 2008), as they participated in assemblies, traveled to other cities for meetings, and began to see politics behind their most basic needs (Svampa and Pereyra, 2003:182). In this way, women met with middle class, highly educated and politicized women and men, as well as with international and local feminists, with whom they could share many conversations and practices. This sharing with diverse human beings, as well as their struggle, both in the roadblocks and in their solidarity economy projects, created affective bonds which generated new energies that, harnessed by their prefigurative organizations, led to a creation of power that was not based on the destruction of other popular experiences, but can rather be explained as a result of the increased affective energy of the participants[xxxiii]. This meeting of diverse people in non-hierarchical ways produced, as well, a flow of knowledge that originated in the "barrios" and was decoded and systematized by many activists and academics, not just in Argentina, but also throughout the world. As these texts were read, critiqued, and incorporated into social movement literature, academics and activists from all corners of the planet visited these movements. Their contact with unemployed working class women contributed, as well, to generate new energies as women were empowered by the knowledge that their actions were noticed and approved even in remote foreign countries by internationally recognized academics and activists. As many women in these movements explained, visits by feminists especially, had an important impact on these organizations, as unemployed women workers benefitted from conversations on gender issues that reinforced notions of gender balance discussed at the "Encuentros".

These movements' prefigurative characteristics, the result of a number of factors that included the participation of feminist women in the field of protest, explain these activists' embodied and discursive critique of the hegemonic masculinity performances of politics of the centralized political parties. It was important for these movements to develop this critique because many of their "referentes" were trained in politics in democratically centralized organizations. Alongside the development of this critique by the "referentes", the grassroots women who massively embodied the highly publicized roadblocks and "puebladas" for the most part were not familiar with the hierarchical cultural processes of Argentine leftist organizations and unions (Fournier and Laudano 2002; Andújar 2005; Rifkin 2008; Svampa and Pereyra 2003). Thus, it can be argued that their massive entrance into this field impacted its power constructions, rendering them more horizontal, less hierarchical, and open to performances of radical, non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities, different from the aggressive performances of power of hierarchical organizations and similar to the practices of the Encuentros. The power performances of the centralist leftist organizations —where many of the actors of this field had been active in the past— are characterized by aggressive displays of the local contemporary version of hegemonic masculinity (Connell 1987a), a leftist macho hegemonic masculinity. While few women access leadership roles, the most powerful men within these organizations build power by squashing dissent, both within and without their own political parties. These silencing of diverse ideas can take physically violent forms, but is most commonly done through verbal terrorism and through the discrediting of competing activists. Purges within the parties are common, as dissent cannot be tolerated in these organizations geared toward State

power. These parties function almost as armies preparing for the take over the State. On the contrary**,** the field of politics by other means favors peaceful, unrelenting, non-aggressive, and non-competitive power performances. Performances of leftist macho hegemonic political masculinity are not completely absent in this field, but they are not well tolerated neither by men or women and are openly criticized in meetings when they occur. Indeed, these performances are ideal types of communication and ways of building power within these social movements, as well as an ideal way of making non-hierarchical connections with other movements.

Different movements within the field present these performances more emphatically than others. Those movements that have achieved a more democratic communication style and build power by strengthening their communities have harnessed not only the material energy that is created in the PPs, but also the discursive energy that flows from their diverse interactions. These experiences allowed for feminisms to circulate throughout these social movements, to sidestream into organizations translating into gender specific demands by women, such as requests for child-care so that women could be part of the evening decision-making plenaries of their organizations, and be able to attend, without the children, potentially violent roadblocks.

As we will see, these movements collaborated, competed, and supported each other in contesting the effects of neoliberalism over the population through thickly connected rhizomatic networks. In the same way that their power structures tend to egalitarianism, their inter-movement connections are non-hierarchical, resembling a rhizome of multiple entries and horizontal connections that enable them to build power by sharing resources and activists with each other, constituting the field of politics by

other means. The movements within this field presented, in uneven ways, a serious challenge to neoliberalism by creating spaces of economic solidarity and practices of direct democracy that constituted a step forward when compared to the lack of internal democracy that permeated the popular organizations of Latin America during the seventies. At the same time, these movements introduced radical practices of direct action that spread throughout the rhizome of the field of politics by other means.

Untamed Direct Actions

The case of the struggle against the installation of a Finnish pulp-mill in Fray Bentos, Uruguay, across the river from the Argentinean town of Gualeguaychú exemplifies an interesting case of "piquetes" and "escraches" enacted not by unemployed workers, but rather by a whole town. The population of Gualeguaychú resisted fiercely the installation of this pulp mill, ostensibly allowed by the Uruguay government to create jobs in a country that had suffered a similar economic crisis to that of Argentina. Citizens of Gualeguaychú argued that the installation of the plant polluted the river, which they share with Uruguay. As neoliberal economic policies had devastating consequences in that area, the population of Gualeguaychú, having reorganized their economy by devoting themselves to green tourism and agriculture, was not interested in allowing the pulp mill to contaminate their territory, forcing them to come up, yet again, with an alternative way to survive.

Contentious direct actions such as the one described above became prevalent, as well, throughout Latin America during the nineties, when indigenous movements in Ecuador and Bolivia emerged protesting neoliberal economic and social policies that affected them in negative ways. Likewise, in Argentina, in 1993, State workers, who had

received no salaries for several months, organized "puebladas" by burning down government agent homes and public buildings (Auyero 2003a, Laufer and Spiguel 1999). Soon thereafter, in 1996 the first "piquetes" of unemployed workers dotted the geography of the North and South of Argentina, as the towns of Cutral-Co and Plaza Huincul revolted by staging long roadblocks. As the structural conditions that generated high unemployment and poverty did not relent, soon the whole country was paralyzed by thousands of people blocking highways in demand of welfare plans and food. As the methodology proved successful, this kind of contentious action became prevalent in Argentine popular politics, reaching even the middle classes. Thus, in the year 2005, to stop the installation of the pulp mills, the ACAG decided to blockade the international bridge that connects Gualeguaychú with Uruguay. Their action generated an international conflict as the bridge was blockaded on and off for several years, and has been permanently blockaded for the past three years. Although their action seriously impacted the relationship between these two countries, as well as the livelihood of citizens in both towns, citizens of Gualeguaychú felt that they had no option. If Botnia, in fact, contaminates on an important scale, Mabel, a woman from the ACAG explained that it would be like a cancer spreading through Gualeguaychú. Mabel made it clear: "After suffering through the nineties, when the local economy all but collapsed, we had finally reached some economic stability. We will not allow it to be destroyed".

Mabel's stand in defense of her livelihood and that of her families and friends points to the cultural processes that neoliberalism attempts to destroy, at the same time that it offers an example of how these policies are deployed unevenly throughout the planet, as the installation of the mill poses only dangers to the 80,000 inhabitants of

Gualeguaychú, at the same time that it was expected to revitalize the Uruguayan economy.

Challenging Neoliberal Governmentality

While the population of Gualeguaychú engaged in a direct confrontation with a globalized industry that had the potential to destroy their newly acquired lifestyle, sectors of the working class had to confront a different, less obvious kind of threat: work/welfare plans. In the late nineties, when structural adjustment rendered so many unemployed, there were no welfare plans in place. Citizens were expected to "pull themselves up by their bootstraps" and find a source of survival on their own. This expectation was consistent with neoliberal philosophy. As Foucault explains neoliberalism places the truth of governmental practice in the market. A good government "function[s] according to truth" (Foucault 2008: 32). Because the market constitutes the site of verification-falsification of practices of government, the unemployed should not be aided directly. Aiding the unemployed would interfere with the market that rendered them jobless. This is the reason why, when welfare plans became necessary to pacify society, they were not introduced as welfare plans, but rather as (low-paid) employment. It was made clear to the unemployed that a refusal to clear the highways would amount to their losing this meager, but vital, economic benefit. In this way, the State engaged in a neoliberal governmentality aimed at guiding individuals into performing certain behaviors out of fear of losing an economic incentive. Instead of appealing to a moral subject, the appeal was to an economic subject who was part of the market —a market that sets the truth for governmental policies.

Many people in Argentina could not find a source of income during the nineties. In 1996, laid off union workers, neighbors and former union members of the town of Cutral-Co, in the South of Argentina, blockaded an important interstate road. Unable to become the mobile subjects that neoliberalism privileged, and empowered by a tradition of contentious actions (Villalón 2008), the people of Cutral-Co defied neoliberalism by collectively organizing against their exclusion from the market, constituting untamed social movements that effectively opposed the local version of neoliberalism. Cutral-Co was successful not only in avoiding State repression of their road blockade ("piquete"), but was also be credited with the restoration of water and electricity to those whose services had been closed down due to lack of payment (Alcañiz 2008), and, most importantly, with the initiation of unemployment subsidies (Young et al. 2002).

These unemployment subsidies, however, were implemented as part of a plan to tame the social movements that were paralyzing the country. Michel Foucault describes this taming process as governmentality. The expected outcome of this multiple intervention is that of producing subjects that will perform according to the needs of the changing markets. It works "upon the capacities of citizens to act on their own behalf" (Foucault 1991) to govern themselves, as these discursive and material practices presuppose a subject with a free will. By privileging and reinforcing certain public behaviors, mostly through incentives, but not totally exempt of coercion, governmentality is deployed with the aim of ensuring that subjects will accept governmental discipline as they learn how to discipline themselves.

Foucault distinguishes between disciplinary and neoliberal governmentality, explaining that although both can be present at the same time, disciplinary

governmentality presupposes an individual who is moral and can be shamed into becoming a docile subject of the changing market, a subject who "operates principally through the internalization of social norms and ethical standards to which individuals conform due to fears of deviance and immorality" (Fletcher, forthcoming). Neoliberal governmentality, on the other hand, presupposes an individual who can be encouraged to engage in productive behaviors through economic pressures, without morals being necessarily part of the equation. The implementation of welfare programs in Argentina can be inscribed mainly as a tool of neoliberal governmentality because the plans he managed offered a meager amount of money to those who possessed nothing with the aim of driving them out of the contentious social movements that were performing roadblocks. Portraying welfare as work, these plans embodied neoliberal governmentality, that is, technologies that mostly through economic incentives can create and support subjectivities that will adapt to the market's shifting needs for labor, and will do so without State support.

In the pages that follow, as I explore how governmentality practices were contested, I discuss the way in which feminism made its way into these social movements as women from different social classes began populating the field of protest.

I must clarify, though, that my analysis of governmentality is not concerned with every social movement in Argentina, not even with every untamed movement, since, given the density of the public spheres, this would be impossible, so I focus, rather, on those that constitute what I have defined as the field of politics by other means —a field constituted by social movements that are at the same time the product of, and the cause for a failed neoliberal governmentality. These social movements are the product of a

failed attempt at governmentality because they came together when the neoliberalized State abandoned its role of protecting its citizens. In order to ensure that "State help" did not "kill self-help" (Friedman 1962) the State set up welfare/work programs that, not run by the State itself, ended up in the hands of social movements that had acquired a legal NGO status that allowed them to manage the welfare plans. The plans were originally intended to clear the highways of roadblocks by creating individuals that would be dependent on these welfare plans, which could be canceled if the recipients did not demobilize. However, the outcome, in the case of the movements of my study, was quite the opposite. Instead of acting as a tool for demobilization, once autonomist and autonomous organizations[xxxiv], accessed these plans in the late nineties, the small stipend provided by the plans ended up financing solidarity economy projects and non-hierarchical rhizomatic connections between social actors. In this way, these unemployed workers, far from demobilizing, instead extended their power to connect with more powerful sectors of society, such as the middle class assemblies and recovered factories. Thus, these social movements are the result of a partially failed attempt to implement governmentality as they were created with the objective of isolating and pacifying the protesting masses. It is partial, though, because most people who were left out of the markets and became unemployed did not organize themselves, and instead became the prey of clientelistic networks that effectively demobilized them, or mobilized them to support the government.

The inscription and sedimentation of power is a process of constant repetition (Butler 1992) because power operates through free subjects (Foucault 2003a)[xxxv]. For governmentality to succeed in creating subjects that could endure unemployment, certain

conditions of subjection had to be met, namely that the unemployed workers had to perform work under the direction of the municipalities of their own towns, or under the "punteros". Instead, the social movements of my study collectively and autonomously decided what socially meaningful work should be done in exchange for the welfare benefit they were receiving. In this way, these social movements set a limit (Murray Li 2007) to governmentality, although they could not avoid introducing the logic of the state into their own organizations.

The use of the welfare plans by the movements implied that the government could impose, at least partially, its own logic into spaces that were, paradoxically, strongly advocating for autonomy. Given that the "punteros" and other political organizations were receiving welfare plans and distributing them among unemployed workers who agreed to their requirements, the autonomous and autonomist social movements conscious of the perils involved in accepting these plans, but lacking in economic resources, found it impossible to organize unemployed workers without that subsidy.

However, accepting these subsidies made these "piquetero" organizations appear as not interested in working, which contributed to diminish their prestige in society at large (Alcañiz 2008)[xxxvi]. Furthermore, the acceptance of the plans meant that the leadership of the organizations received a powerful tool to discipline their constituency, which in some cases resulted in extending governmental technologies to the "piqueterxs" (DiMarco, private exchange) and the creation of new clientelistic networks (Villalón 2008). However, although unable to sway the media's representation of themselves, some of the organizations at least temporarily defeated these techniques and programs as they collectively and autonomously organized, challenging neoliberal governmentality.

Far from becoming the mobile, isolated, shifting ideal subject of neoliberalism, they strengthened their own solidarity networks. In that way, a failure in governmentality can be both predicated as the cause and as the consequence of the unemployed worker social movement.

Leftist Macho Hegemonic Masculinities and Leninism

Although many of the "referentes" of the autonomist and autonomous social movements had previous political experiences in democratically leftist centralized parties, the organization and direct actions of these movements differed significantly from the way leftist parties had been organizing in Argentina. A deep critique of vanguardism articulated by organizers and activists who had previous experience with leftist organizations, as well as a generalized disillusion with political parties and unions, compound by a distrust in the State and institutions of democracy gave rise to a "movement of movements" where women could build power through an engagement with their communities. I contrast these movements with leftist centralized political parties, modeled around Leninism. I am aware, of course, of the existence of Trotskyist, Maoist, and other forms of democratically centralized parties. However, it was Lenin who first articulated in Russia the need for a centralized party, as his organizing strategies parted ways with the European social democratic parties. His model of centralization of power, needed, in his view, to oppose the centralization of power of the State, was modified by other leftist organizers, such as Trotsky and Mao, but the parties based on this principle all share in common their adherence to a hierarchical power structure, where decisions are reached by small numbers of highly educated cadres. While social movements within the field of politics by other means organize around the principle of

power-with, centralized political parties, on the contrary, are guided by the principle of power-over, as they compete with other popular organizations over activists and resources, at the same time that they do not hesitate to ostracize and condemn expressions of the left that deviate from their own programs. Because of their aggressiveness and violent methodologies, I link Leninist performances of power with certain masculinities, whose main characteristics have been described as vulnerable and weak (Irigaray 1985), in constant fear of castration (Cornell 1998), characterized by an "inflated sense of self-importance" (Seager 1999:172), or as violent (Connell 1987a), aggressive, sadistic, and dominant (MacKinnon 1993). Moreover, authors link masculinities with notions of heroic achievement and competitiveness (Britain 1953), (Harris 1995) (Miedzian 1992). Although Catharine MacKinnon (1993), Nancy Chodorow (1994) and, to a certain extent, Luce Irigaray (1985) seem to identify an essential masculinity that either defines men or is defined by men, Connell (1987) makes clear that both femininities and masculinities are multiple, socially constructed and strongly defined by structures such as workplaces, the army, the school, or I might add, different social movements. At the same time that these structures "impinge on the way femininity and masculinity are formed in a particular milieux" (Connell 1987a: 182), these makings of femininities and masculinities impact society at large. As masculinities are multiple (Coles 2009), historically (HIll Collins 1999) and culturally specific (Gonzalez 1996), some of the socially constructed traits described above connect with what I have named leftist macho hegemonic masculinity (and femininity[xxxvii]).

Connell defines hegemonic masculinity as "the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of

patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (Connell 1995). This definition takes mainly into account the oppression suffered by women, but leaves out considerations such as oppression of men by men, especially by heterosexual men who physically and emotionally conform to this hegemonic masculinist ideal (Coles 2009). But hegemonic masculinity is also oppressive of straight men, as these men, regardless of their subjectivities might try to conform to an ideal of masculinity that might not necessarily be connected with their own subjectivities. Thus, certain types of hegemonic masculinity oppress a diversity of possible alternative masculinities that cannot bloom as long as this hegemony rules. As we will see, although there were political and economic issues involved in the downfall of many of the unemployed worker solidarity economy projects, the force of leftist macho hegemonic masculinity translated as well in negative attitudes of some of the movement's "referentes". The "referentes" who initially had invested efforts in constructions of power-with, with strong emphasis in the politics of affection, eventually, as the movements began to unravel, did not hesitate, in their desperation, to use power-over techniques, such as character murder, as well as physical and emotional violence. For example, when a group of activists tried to leave one of the organizations with the machines they had used for years in one of the PPs, they were shot at by angry "referentes" who wanted to keep the machines to start a new PP, with different unemployed workers[xxxviii].

I link the development of a particular kind of leftist macho hegemonic masculinity in popular organizations in Argentina first with the Spanish colonization, which introduced patriarchal values that were later sustained through institutions like the

Catholic Church (Di Marco, forthcoming, Sutton 2010) and the Armed Forces (Sutton 2010) throughout different dictatorships, as well as by the Peronist party, of broad influence over Argentine popular culture. However, in this dissertation I focus on the constructions of gender and power-within leftist centralized parties, because the "referentes" of most of the movements of my research had their start in politics in these institutions. The cadres within leftist centralized organizations have parted ways with other manifestations of the Argentine culture, but retain aspects of this particular version of hegemonic masculinity in their own popular organizations. Influenced by the general cultural processes of mainstream Argentina, and embodying a structure that requires centralization to organize a violent overthrow of the State, centralized leftist parties are not spaces where performances of radical, non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities can bloom. On the contrary, what is observed there are performances of this masculinity, not only in leftist centralized organizations, but also in social movements without prefigurative characteristics, as well as in some of the individuals within the field of politics by other means. However, while leftist macho hegemonic masculinity performances in leftist centralized political parties and non-prefigurative social movements are either tolerated or rewarded with power privileges, in the field of politics by other means these same performances are discouraged, as they are connected with the old style politics that these activists want to leave behind. These performances are envisioned as with negative consequences for rhizomatic, non-hierarchical power constructions and men who perform this masculinity are characterized as having a sense of inflated importance, described by Claudia, a woman in La Olla, as "a need to strut their egos". These engagement in performances of raw competitiveness are explained by

Patricia, in the UAC Regional Capital as "a need to prove who has the longest [penis])". Their competitiveness explains a tendency to verbal and physical violence —to which I can personally testify as I still bear the signs of this leftist macho hegemonic political masculinity under the shape of a broken nose.

In 1991, Pablo Rieznik, prominent leader and Senatorial Candidate of the Partido Obrero (Worker's Party) (PO from now on), punched my nose, breaking it, as he sent me flying under a table with books and literature of another leftist organization, Patria Libre (Free Motherland). The two women running the table picked me up, sat me down, and restrained me from re-joining the surreal raging battle over the ownership of a Trotskyist flag in the halls of the College of Philosophy and Literature (Filo) of the University of Buenos Aires (UBA). Rieznik's punch was the culminating event of a yearlong struggle between the Central Committee and the youth of the party over intervention tactics in the University. While the Central Committee of the party (all of them men, with the exception of a woman who barely participated) wanted the youth to just sell the newspapers they wrote, the youth were determined to engage in University specific conflicts. Although the issues at stake seem to lack the urgency that might explain the use of public physical violence, the incident was an escalation of the verbal terrorist tactics that the youth had endured during that year. Today, I connect the PO's national board's aggressive, hierarchical, dominant and violent behavior with the leftist macho hegemonic political masculinity that permeates the constructions of democratically centralized political parties in Argentina.

Performances of hegemonic political masculinity cannot be attributed to women, since women who can be aggressive and bent on incrementing their power through

domination are still performing some kind of femininity, given their embodiment in a woman's body. Because of their embodied, gendered self, all of their performances will be decoded as feminine, of some kind, unless they can change or disguise their bodies. However, some women in these leftist circles perform a leftist macho hegemonizing femininity politics, that translate into a series of negative behaviors, such as public chanting of insults to government officials that are either focusing on the official's mother's genitalia, or highlight patriarchal morals — "son of a whore[xxxix]". Moreover, women who perform leftist macho hegemonic femininities politics also embody a number of behaviors observed most often in men, such as taking too much time in meetings, trying to dominate the agendas, and at times seeming to talk just to have everybody else hear their voices, as they repeat ideas and proposals that were already enunciated by others. These women are aggressive, put down those compañeras and compañeros who do not agree with them, while at times they might even shout other women out. Women who perform leftist macho hegemonic femininity politics, although ostensibly fighting with men over power, still contribute to sustaining spaces organized through power-over principles. Indeed, as these women struggle with masculine tools over power, because they are competitive, verbal and sometimes even physically aggressive to silence other people, they are contributing to the hegemony of power-over performances, which many times result in intra and inter movement confrontations, and, finally, splits. Furthermore, these women's performances become oppressive for those who perform radical non-hegemonizing political femininities, thus reinforcing performances of leftist macho hegemonic masculinity, which contribute to strengthen men's public leadership.

Within centralized parties and non-prefigurative social movements, some women take on masculinist political roles as a reaction to the difficulty they experience in being heard, as they are commonly left out of prominent leadership roles. My interviews with women with former militancy in the Communist Party, the Movimiento Socialista de los Trabajadores, and other democratically centralized organizations confirms that only "macho women" can break through the hegemony of power held by aggressive masculinities —achieving leadership roles that resemble in almost every aspect the leadership style of men who perform leftist macho hegemonic masculinities.

Although there are other characteristics of leftist macho hegemonic masculinity in Argentina, competitiveness, a tendency to dominate meetings, and aggressive exclusions are the issues that play a negative role in the gender power constructions of social movements. These dominant, socially constructed performances of leftist macho hegemonic masculinity not only negatively impact women's lives, but also other men's lives —in particular those whose subjectivities do not conform to the dominant vision of masculinity (hooks 1984). Language has performativity characteristics, that is, language can impact and create reality, not just describe it. When a Judge of the Peace says: "I declare you husband and wife", his utterance effectively creates a legal bond between the woman and the man in front of him. Likewise, gender performances make gender. Because there is no core, or essence to gender, but rather, gender is created by a series of acts, it is our very acts that make gender. This performative characteristic of gender explains why performances of gender constitute both the performer's genderized subjectivity and the social significance of gender (Butler 2004a). What gender means is constituted by what "gender" does —there is no doer, just deeds (Butler 1997). Thus, as

men have an almost complete monopoly of the public word, their constant presence in the media, and the subsequent silencing of women's public voices, reinforces leftist macho masculinist hegemonic notions that women are meant for the domestic, less important, spheres while men are portrayed as those who can take on prestigious public roles, such as public speaking. Mackinnon (1987) argues that masculinity defines humanity, as it relegates women to the "private, moral, valued, subjective", while men hold the values of the "public, ethical, factual, objective" (MacKinnon 1987). While Mackinnon's argument seems to describe a uniform society without classes and ethnicities, still her claim rings true in the sense that accessing the media has an important impact in constructions of gender, as it extends its influence over all of society, regardless of how different publics decode its message. Thus, when social movements are represented in public almost exclusively by men, women are once again relegated to the sphere of the domestic, as they are effectively the ones who make arrangements for transportation, cook and bring food, take care of the children, make banners, even as they take on security duties by placing their bodies in front of police in riot gear in dangerous protests and "piquetes".

Highway Performances of Radical, Non-hegemonizing Political Femininities and Masculinities

Given this scenario of aggressive, competitive masculinities, hegemonic within Argentine culture, my research addresses the cultural processes of the prefigurative movements that allowed for what I call performances of radical, non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities, at the same time that I trace the horizontal influence of feminism on these social movements —the sidestreaming of feminism.

Although non-centralized, non-hierarchical organizations seem to allow and foster space for radical, non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities to bloom, other factors, such as the education of men in issues of gender oppression, women's age, education, past history of activism, and their role in managing resources, were variables in women's possibilities for empowerment. Performances of leftist macho hegemonic political masculinities can be construed as exerting power-over (Holloway 2002) other men and women, both by hegemonic consent and sheer domination. Radical, non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities, on the contrary, are characterized by performances based on power-with. Power-over is defined by the capacity that some have to make people do what they want, while they appear to be the only doers. In this way, they mask all the social relationships that sustain their power (Holloway 2002). The opposite of power-over, for Holloway, is power-to: the power that comes from what we can do, always in a social context, with others, but not by using others (Holloway 2002). Holloway's description of power-to coincides with feminist conceptions of power-with. However, Ann Ferguson (2009) argues that power-to can be individualistic, just "enabling individuals", while power-with is the product of " the energy and capacity for self-organization of the whole group" (Ferguson 2009), as in the women of my study that coordinate organic gardens, PPs, and other solidarity economy initiatives that empower them not only economically, but also socially within their own families and neighborhoods.

Women and men who perform radical, non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities are aware of their prestige and consciously allow for other people to talk before they do in the meetings, to avoid unduly influencing the assemblies.

Feminine political performances can be resilient in trying to drive a point across in meetings, but do not take up unnecessary time explaining what somebody else made clear already. Performances of radical non-hegemonizing political femininity and masculinity are characterized as well for a non-strident, non-violent but powerfully committed engagement with ideals and a tendency to reach decisions through consensus. Performances of radical, non-hegemonizing political femininities are not absent from the road blockades and "escraches". This non-violent but at the same time courageous resistance has ensured many times that nobody would fall into the trap of police provocation. Unlike some men who "enter in the provocation" of the police by responding with sticks and stones to police tear gas and rubber (or even lead) bullets, women and men who perform political femininity for the most part just hold their banners and keep their peace, without losing their ground and without escalating already volatile situations.

At the same time that women coordinating these autonomous spaces gain and perform power-with, they also contribute to create non-hierarchical spaces in which radical, non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities can be performed. On the contrary, centralized hierarchical structures such as the democratically centralized party derive their strength from sedimentations of power, especially in the central committee. Foucault (1996) explains that social power "is a strategic relation that has been stabilized through institutions" (Foucault 1996: 387). This stabilization, these sedimentations of power through institutions are difficult to reverse and tend to turn rigid the relations of power that made that sedimentation possible. Thus, the central committee of a Leninist party is difficult to change or remove, given that it is the result of a

sedimentation and stabilization of power relations within the party. Because women, historically and with few exceptions, have not been part of the leadership of these institutions in Argentina, it is difficult for them to access, change, or modify the central committee, and for that matter, the party.

On the contrary, social movements with non-hierarchical, non-centralized structures are permeable to change and have fewer instances of sedimentation and stabilization of power. Although not lacking in structure, and thus avoiding the perils of structurelessness (Freeman 1973), the most important sedimentation of power-within these social movements is in the general assembly of all members. The assembly elects those who will carry out their decisions without appointing long term, permanent or semi-permanent, representatives. Although this mechanism has not been enough to prevent the consolidation of leftist macho hegemonic masculinity leadership in many movements[xl], there is more fluidity and mobility in these power relations than in the formalized mechanism of power that ensures the leadership of the central committee in a centralized political party. Thus, social movements within the field of politics by other means are friendlier spaces for these performances, as their rhizomes of power are fluid, characterized by their lack of an aggressive impulse to establish power-over —without which it is all but impossible to access positions of power-within organizations that have long standing sedimentations of power as in the democratically centralized parties.

I will explore my own experiences as part of the PO, from 1984 to 1991, as I recall the gender constructions I was able to observe, comparing it with experiences from other women in similar organizations, and contrasting these experiences with those of women in non-centralized, prefigurative organizations. To this end, I will analyze the

intersection between women's private lives and the public spheres by focusing on the biographies, actions, emotions, analysis, and dreams of women, and the social, political and cultural networks that constitute social movements.

Methods and Personal Background

My engagement with leftist politics and activism is long-standing. As a young woman, born and raised in Argentina, I became deeply involved in organizing against the policies of the IMF, and other International Lending Institutions, which many Argentine people have held responsible for the destruction of the economy since 1976. As a student and Trotskyist activist in the School of Philosophy at the University of Buenos Aires, I organized a committee for Human Rights to support the work of the Madres de Plaza de Mayo and other organizations to bring to trial the military officers who had committed crimes against humanity. In 1990 I was expelled, along with 20 of my compañerxs, from the PO. The main reason behind our expulsion was our critique of the party's line of intervention at the University. As student-activists, we thought our work should be focused on student initiated struggles, rather than on selling the party's newspaper and flying all over the country to support the work of a few activists who were trying to incorporate industrial workers to the party. During the year that preceded our expulsion, we were able to finally realize that the party was a closed-up hierarchical, violent organization, dominated by a few older men who aggressively tried to impose their vision of politics on us and on everybody they could. Following our traumatic expulsion from the party, I became active in the Student Union and in the Board of Trustees of my school, as part of a non-hierarchical student organization engaged in changing the contents of our study program so that our theoretical work as philosophers would support

Argentina's need for social change. In 1994, I moved to the United States to work with the Bread and Puppet Theater, a radical, international collective of politically oriented puppeteers. Shortly thereafter I started organizing and coordinating street theater actions in major protests across the US and Canada, as part of the anti-corporate globalization movement.

In 2002, as I was helping build puppets to protest the G8 in Calgary, Canada, I received a phone call from a friend with news of a repression on the Pueyrredón Bridge outside Buenos Aires. As a result of police actions in what came to be known as the Massacre, two of the MTD Anibal Verón unemployed workers, friends of my friends, were killed and hundreds injured by the police. On that same day, dozens of us had performed a die-in[xli] to protest the 2001 death of Carlo Giuliani in Italy, during the G8 Protests in Milano. However, when I addressed the spokes council, coordinated by Starhawk (Starhawk 1988), in the hopes that they would decide on some action to protest, all I got was a well-written declaration of solidarity. My first, well-concealed reaction was anger. I thought that they could empathize with Carlo Giuliani because he was European, somebody in the Global North, like most of the protestors in Calgary were, but could not empathize with us, South Americans, the kind of people that get killed in protests often, while the killing at the hand of the police of an European born person was exceptional for them. Later, as I calmed down, I realized that they had established empathy with Giuliani because they knew about the anticorporate globalization movement in Europe. They did not know that sectors of the Argentine social movements were resisting neoliberalism in ways that were not radically different from their own. So I overcame my anger and set out to educate this movement.

Building on contacts established as a civic activist in Argentina since 1984, in 2002 I co-founded the Argentina Autonomista Project, an organization designed to enhance communication between Argentine social movements and academics, students and activists in the Global North. Inspired by the Zapatista practice of receiving visitors from the Global North to increase their international visibility and protect them from State repression, I began organizing delegations and residencies of European and US citizens to different Movimiento de Trabajadores Desocupados (MTD) within the Anibal Verón. From 2003 to 2005, I also toured throughout the US, Canada, Mexico, Europe and Argentina with my puppet show about contemporary Argentine social movements, inviting unemployed women from this country to share their experiences with a wide variety of audiences.

These experiences of international political solidarity (Scholz 2007), were not aimed at gathering financial support or assistance for these movements, but rather the idea was to engage in transformative dialogues that would help those who came to meet the "piqueteras" understand that neoliberal practices and ideologies are responsible for placing populations at risk in different countries of the world. As history proved, our message was not far off as a few years later the United States was the epicenter of a global economic crisis which generated high levels of unemployment, as people plunged into poverty in important numbers. Although donations for the movements were accepted, when people asked what could they do to help, our reply was inevitably: "This is a global problem, that can be addressed glocally. We can all organize in our own communities, reaching out throughout the globe to support others, as we, together, gather support for our common struggle." Although models to struggle against neoliberalism

cannot be exported, there are lessons to be learned from collective experiences that happen in different parts of the world, and solidarity can be built even among those whose structural situation is not the same, as in the case of the mainly middle class US citizens who received the Argentine unemployed workers at their universities and community centers. As Ann Ferguson (forthcoming), building on bell hooks (hooks 1984) explains, through political networking, empathic connections can be made among individuals and groups to establish solidarity across borders and socio-economic classes.

Outline of the Dissertation

To analyze this complex scenario and my own involvement, in Chapter II I explore my methods as an "amphibian researcher" (Svampa 2008). Maristella Svampa explains that it is possible to be an academic and an activist at the same time, without losing academic rigor, or sympathy for the movements of our research. The idea behind the metaphor of the amphibian researcher is that the researcher can move and live both in the academic and the social movement worlds. In this sense, while striving to stay true to the politics that I share with these movements, I set high academic standards for my work. My methodology is informed by an auto-ethnographic inquiry into what led me to a life of research and support of these movements, as I analyze my positionality, class, gender and ethnic background, in order to address issues of power in my fieldwork, and how these might have impacted the outcome of my work. This dissertation highlights those issues, as it documents the different strategies and techniques I applied during the 7-year timeframe of this research. These techniques included multi-sited, long-term participant observation, hundreds of informal interviews, 30 formal, in depth interviews, five focus groups, photo elicitation, photo and video analysis, and archival research.

Thus, I have produced an ethnography that is not only scholarly ambitious, but also aims at being ethically sound. In addition, I have contributed as well with cutting edge theorizations to the debates over the ethics, potentiality, and quagmires involved in Northern-Southern research of the public spheres, and the complex power dynamics involved in the research of Global South social movements conducted by scholars based in the Global North.

Chapter III frames the emergence of contemporary Argentine social movements as unintended consequences of neoliberalism, while it traces a genealogy of the making of these movements to the mid nineties, and follows their development throughout the early 2000s. The chapter also focuses on the practices of solidarity economy of these movements, highlighting the role of these projects in empowering women within the organizations and in their own neighborhoods. In this chapter, I explore, as well, the negative impact of the welfare plans that subsidized the labor of these projects, as the field is not without its gray zones (Auyero 2007). Javier Auyero describes as the gray zone a space where social movements interact with state agents. The gray zone of these movements exists due to their interaction with the State that provides funding for their microenterprises through welfare programs. These impacts their quest for autonomy as the government only subsidizes activities that it can control to a certain extent.

Chapter IV engages in a study of performances of radical, non-hegemonizing political masculinities and femininities. Although the women and men in this field have different class and educational backgrounds, they all engaged in direct actions through non-centralized, non-partisan organizations. As I found out, their motivations were diverse, ranging from mystical-ecological concerns about the earth, to outright

desperation when faced with unemployment. However, all of them manifested a strong aversion to partisan politics and clientelistic practices, which led them to join, or create, organizations that they envisioned as fundamentally different from political parties. These same women explained, also, that they resorted to direct action either out of frustration after failing to obtain what they needed in more traditional ways, or after witnessing other people fail while trying to solve their issues through less contentious mechanism.

In this chapter I address, as well, the gender and power structures of these groups, as I problematize the different communicational strategies used by women and men in the meetings of these movements. Hegemonies of power (Ortner 1996) become clear as women talk less than men in private meetings, and seldom address the press, while the organizations rely heavily on their leadership and organizational work. Women, for the most part conscious of these issues, in some cases have chosen to silence their own ideas to avoid conflicts and to ensure shorter meetings. In other cases, they strategically avoid raising issues of gender as they privilege disseminating what they unavoidably term "more important matters" —the ecological or socioeconomic problems that brought them together (Fournier and Laudano 2002; Rifkin 2008).

In this chapter I extend my analysis to performances of gender in the escraches, road blockades and meetings. I have analyzed how gender is made in different social movements within the field of politics by other means by attending numerous meetings and direct actions. These observations allowed to assess how the different roles women and men take on these actions reinforce or subvert traditional gender roles. Although for the most part women and men share the same activities, it is primarily women who

organize and guarantee supplies, such as food, paint cans, banners, etc., while they take on security roles, paint graffiti on walls and sidewalks, hand out leaflets, and at times chant slogans through bullhorns. However, when the press arrives, inevitably, the same women ask men to talk about the issues that brought them together.

In this chapter I also analyze the extent to which performances of hegemonic masculinity contributed to the downfall of some of the autonomist social movements, at the same time that these same performances deepened the gender imbalance that some of the autonomous movements presented.

I assess the gender of repression through a problematization of the roles of policewomen and piqueteras in the escraches and road blockades before and after the repression of the Pueyrredón Bridge in 2002. What became known as the Massacre was a violent police repression of a road blockade organized by the Coordinadora Anibal Verón (CAV)[xlii], during which hundreds of piqueteros were injured, and two of them killed. I document how, after the repression, unemployed workers used gender analysis to prove that they were families in need and not terrorists deserving repression, placing only women and children at the front of their "escraches" and road blockades.

My aim at writing this dissertation is to offer ethnographic data on how women in untamed social movements can collectively empower themselves even through catastrophic crises, in the hopes that my findings will help illuminate the path of populations worldwide that were impacted by the global crisis of neoliberalism. As global unemployment and poverty grow, and banks and multinational corporations continue to increase their profit margins, women all over the world find themselves in situations similar to those encountered by Argentine women. May these lines help them

learn from the struggles and politics of these courageous women, and from the feminist men who, by acknowledging their gender privilege, have worked toward opening spaces for incipient feminine leaderships.

Notes

[i] Unemployed workers participating in roadblocks were named "piqueterxs" by the media. Eventually these unemployed workers began referring to themselves in that way.

[ii] Many social movements in Argentina, influenced by sectors of the feminist movement, have begun to "degenderize" the Spanish language by using an "x" instead of the masculine "o" when referring to women and men. I will follow their example, as yet another way of trying to access emic meanings.

[iii] I am using territory here almost a synonym for habitat. While the left in Argentina, before the nineties, was mainly concerned with the industrial proletariat, once unemployment became rampant, as workers who were still employed clung to their jobs and would not go on strike (Svampa and Pereyra 2003), the "barrio" became the site of intensive political intervention by activists that had previously been part of democratically centralized organizations, as well as by a new generation of unemployed worker activists who had no previous political experience. The "barrio" became the habitat, the territory, where new political experiences were forged. However, this human territory is not just a physical space as the notion of habitat might suggest, as it is laden with multiple meanings and is the object of intense struggles over its control. In this sense, the barrio was re-territorialized (Deleuze and Guattari 2008b) by these social movements, as they effectively disputed discursive and material power with the "punteros". In Arturo Escobar words, a territory is "the fundamental and multidimensional space for the creation and recreation of the social, economic, and cultural values and practices of the communities" (Escobar 1998).

[iv] The concept of node indexes structures without a center that nevertheless have the capacity to organize activist practices and actions.

[v] Foucault's conception of politics as the continuation of war by other means turns around Von Clausewitz's conception of war as the continuation of politics: he envisions everyday life as the product of war under the form of politics. Although Foucault did later temper this notion by allowing for an analytical differentiation between war and politics, his idea of power deployed across society as war still holds true if one thinks of society as a multiplicity of force-relations strategically deployed either as war or as politics.

[vi] I refer to these actions as untamed because they break with the acceptable (and useless) protesting style that had been prevalent since the end of the dictatorship. The bureaucratized labor unions, when faced with the structural adjustment that rendered many in their membership unemployed, responded with "tamed" strikes that had no impact on the massive dismissal of workers. Gardiner (Gardiner 2004) elaborates on the concept of wild publics and counterpublics in opposition to Habermas' idea of an all inclusive public sphere constituted by a rational dialogue leading to universal understanding. Wild counterpublics although not exempt of rationality, due to their

subaltern nature (Melucci 1988) necessarily have to employ different strategies that stem from their particular, non-universal life experiences, engaging in disruptive, contentious, and embodied actions. However, "wild" implies a state of nature and a lack of rationality that can be dangerously compared to the reactions of animals in the wilderness. Thus, I have decided to employ instead the metaphor of untamed actions by social movements, as I believe these movements contested governmentality —a certain kind of taming process, deployed through disciplinary policies as well as through incentives.

[vii] Following the official pardon by Carlos Menem in 1989 of all the military involved in State terrorism between 1976 and 1983, the children of the disappeared (HIJOS) started organizing "escraches". These mass mobilizations involved street theater and peaceful attacks against military officers' private homes, in an effort to isolate these officers in their own barrios. The objective was to alert neighbors of the presence in their neighborhoods of military and police officers who had committed crimes against humanity.

[viii] The First Encuentro de Mujeres was in Buenos Aires, in May 1986 with 960 women attending from all over the country. Today, approximately 30,000 get together to discuss issues connected with gender, through a methodology that includes most prominently horizontal connections and diversity. See http://www.24-encuentromujeres.com.ar/index.php.

[ix] What follows is a short list of studies on neoliberalism that either address its impact on Argentina, or provide a more global account of its aims and consequences: Adamovsky 2003, 2004; Alcañiz 2008; Alvarez, Dagnino and Escobar 1998; Auyero 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2006, 2007; Albro 2005; Basu 2000; Buroway 2000; Colectivo Situaciones 2006; Comaroff 2001; Cruikshank 1999; Escobar 1992,1995; Ferguson and Gupta 2002; (Ferguson 2010) Giarraca 2007; Graeber 2003; Hale 2005 and 2006; Harvey 2005; Hemment 2007; Lyon-Callo and Hyatt 2003; Lyon-Callo 2004; Mische 2003, Murray Li 2007; Ong 2006; Petras 1997; Sassen 1998; Stahler-Sholk 2008; Svampa 2003, 2004, 2006, 2007, 2008; Tapia 2006; Tsing 2005, Zibechi 2006.

[x] Studies that research unintended consequences of neoliberalism include R. Argawala's (2007) that shows how informal workers were able to constitute themselves as a class and make demands from the State and David Harvey's (2005) analyzes of China's economic boom after the 1980s.

[xi] My analysis of neoliberalism was developed through my participation in Julie Hemment's 2007 seminar at the Anthropology Department at Umass, and later through the Social Movements and 21st Century Cultural-Political Transformations, especially through Niall Stephen's research of the stages of neoliberalism.

[xii] Although I find their analysis of political opportunity structure useful, I do not agree with Goodwin and Jasper (2004) that only movements that are aimed at taking over the State can be repressed. The unemployed workers of Argentina for the most part were not

interested in the take over of the State, but were repressed anyway in numerous opportunities, as they were envisioned as an obstacle to governance.

[xiii] For information on "puebladas" (whole town revolts), see Contentious Lives (Auyero 2003), Neoliberalism, Corruption, and Legacies of Contention (Villalon 2008), Que Queda del Movimiento Obrero (Farinetti 1999), and Las Puebladas Argentinas a Partir del Santiagueñazo de 1993 (Laufer and Spiguel 1999).

[xiv] Some authors conceptualize NGOs as effective organizations to bring around social change (Fisher 1998), while others denounce them as handmaids of imperialism (Petras and Veltmeyer 1997). A number of authors, on the other hand, see NGOs as active participants of what Evelina Dagnino names "the perverse confluence" of neoliberalism and citizenship participation (Dagnino 2007, 2003; Dagnino et al. 2006; Hale 2002). Yet another group of authors (with which I align myself) understand NGOs as valuable insofar as they constitute alternatives to development, while cautioning that this is not always the case (Alvarez 1999; Basu 2000; Fisher 1997; DeMars 2005).

[xv] Peronism appear sometimes in the national elections as Partido Justicialista. Traditionally, they are connected with populist tendencies, while the Unión Cívica Radical (UCR) represents the middle classes in popular imagination.

[xvi] A genealogy of the rhizome can be established by tracing not only connections with the past, but also the multiplicity of connections and lines of the field of politics by other means with a number of organizations and people in the present. Thus, at the same time that I engage in a traditional genealogy, tracing the influences of activists' past experiences over this field's, I also trace the present lines of this field that, starting in one movement, connect with other movements, with local and international activists and scholars, with feminists (through the Encuentro Nacional de Mujeres and through other instances), with the State, with the "punteros", with family members, etc. Although Deleuze and Guattari claim that "the rhizome is an antigenealogy" (Deleuze and Guattari 2008), because the environment has more influence over the rhizome than genetics, after observing social movements for many years, it becomes clear to me that past political experiences also constituted the multiplex subjectivities of the activists in the field of politics by other means.

[xvii] Washington consensus was a term first used in 1989 to describe neoliberal economic policies supported by the U.S. government and implemented by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

[xviii] A "dispositif" or apparatus has been defined by Foucault as a "thoroughly heterogenous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific Statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions–in short, the said as much as the unsaid" (Foucault 1980).

[xix] Although I talk about radical, non-hegemonizing performances of political femininities and masculinities, I do not think of femininities or masculinities as essential or single. Both femininities and masculinities are multiple, socially constructed and culturally specific, as they are the result of societal struggles over the meaning of gender and sexuality.

[xx] Ferguson articulates this concept, which originates in the US women's movement.

[xxi] In classic Marxism, the proletariat had a privileged role in the struggle against capitalism because this class had the capacity to stop production through a general strike. The general strike would undo the very foundation of capitalism, the exploitation of labor, allowing the revolutionary party to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

[xxii] Norma Giarraca (Giarraca 2007) explains the scope of the deal that megamining corporations obtained during the Menem administration, the core of which has never been modified. Here are some of its most salient characteristics (the translation if mine): a) Double deduction of expenses related to mining exploitation. One hundred percent of the capital invested to determine the feasibility of the project can be deduced from gains. b) Devolution of taxes (IVA) on exploration: Law 25.429 incorporated the devolution of fiscal taxes originated through the investment in exploration, twelve months after the expenses have been incurred. c) No payment of fees and custom duties: Registered mining companies do not pay custom taxes when importing machinery and equipment. Mining service industry corporations also benefit from this exception. d) There are no taxes on profit derived from capital investments in the mining industry or from investments over mining rights. e) No taxes on mining properties. There are no contributions requested from mining properties, their profits, products, machinery, and vehicles. f) Provincial and Municipal taxes: The Federal Mining Agreement (Acuerdo Federal Minero, Law 24,228) guarantees that the provinces will eliminate all internal taxation on mining activity. g) Taxes (Regalías): Mining corporations only pay taxes in 7 provinces, out of 23 in Argentina.

[xxiii] Sober estimates suggest that approximately 10,000 people work in the recovered factories (Ruggeri 2005b)

[xxiv] Ferguson re-conceptualizes of Marx's concept of "from each according to ability, to each according to needs" (Marx [1875] 1986).

[xxv] The use of direct action, particularly road blockades and take over of buildings exceeds the movements of my research, as it has become the main way of protesting in Argentina. Although the movements I work with share in the use of this kind of direct action with many others, they part ways in that their prefigurative structures tend to egalitarian organizing at the same time that many of them engage in practices of solidarity economy.

[xxvi] Graeber describes "this new language of civil disobedience" (Graeber 2003: 329) as those tactics that combine practices such as street theater with extremely disruptive

actions, as road blockades with puppets. These tactics, however, are carefully designed so as not to produce harm to humans or animals, thus Graeber's characterization of peaceful warfare.

[xxvii] I leave the MST out of the field of politics by other means, because, as Sander Navarro suggests (Navarro 2006), this movement does not engage in constructions of power-with other communities, but rather isolates itself from other rural organizations. Moreover, the MST is not organized around non-hierarchy, but, on the contrary, since 1986 they have created cadre schools, which inevitable establishes a leadership hierarchy within the movement, at the same time that they engaged in centralization of their decision-making processes. I leave the Pachakutik movement in Ecuador out of this field because of their orientation toward State power, as proved by their failed attempt to access State power through the elections of 1996 (Harnecker 2002). Further research is necessary to assess the internal power structures of the Venezuelan and Bolivian social movements, as well as Ecuatorian movements other than the Pachakutik.

[xxviii] As we will see, the adherence to the principle of non-hierarchy is uneven throughout the field of politics by other means. While La Olla, for example, can be considered strictly non-hierarchical, the ACAG, although assembly based, has actors within its ranks that hold more power than others within the Asamblea, as, for example, does Alfredo de Angelis, one of the leaders of the powerful Federación Agraria Argentina. But even in this extreme case of power imbalances among the asambleístas, their decisions are made in assemblies of all members, as they lack in any kind of centralized decision-making processes.

[xxix] The Massacre, however, was a huge blow to the organization, because as I explain in Chapter IV, it broke their alliance with middle classes, at the same time that it brought to the front different approaches to organizing within the CAV.

[xxx] Flacso scholars conducted research on women leadership roles in the Unión Cívica Radical, the Peronist Party and others. Results showed that women had scarce representation on decision-making bodies.
http://www.eurosur.org/FLACSO/mujeres/argentina/part-5.htm

[xxxi] One outstanding characteristic of Peronism is that it can be analyzed from the perspective of a political party (Partido Justicialista, in one of its iterations), but it should also be analyzed from the perspective of a social movement. Indeed, many activist in Argentine social movements self-identify as Peronists, although they do not support the Partido Justicialista, or other expressions of electoral Peronism.

[xxxii] In this context, "feminization of resistance" alludes to the fact that, at first, women were visibly populating the roadblocks, in numbers unheard of before. However, the "piquetero" movement continued to be represented by men in public, both through the media and in their negotiations with the government. I had the opportunity to talk with some women who had been organizing the first piquetes in the interior of the country. I asked one of them why they selected men to talk with the government, and she explained

that there were a number of reasons, ranging from the fact that some of the men had previous activist experience and felt more secure talking with government officials, to the fact that the National Guard or the police were less likely to attack the "piquete" if the women were there with the children and few men were present, as attacking women still looks bad in the media, even if these women are dark skinned and working class.

[xxxiii] Rosemary Hennessy would refer to these dynamics as revolutionary love, as she explains that this basic human affect has to be taken into account as a vital factor that "motivates", "complicates" and "undermines" our "political agency, practice, and commitment" in the development of a "collective form of revolutionary conscience" (Hennessy 2000:208). However, Hennessy does not delve in how this love is dished out in democratically centralized organizations. Her analysis is centered on the relationship between needs, love, and capitalism.

[xxxiv] Autonomous social movements are those that attempt to remain independent from the state, churches, political parties, and unions. Autonomist social movements are not only interested in being independent from the state, but engage, as well, in power constructions that are decentralized and non-hierarchical.

[xxxv] Socially conscious, politically engaged progressive sectors of the U.S. academy regard Michel Foucault's conceptions of power as leaving little room for social change. However, in my view, although in Discipline and Punishment (Foucault 1979) he does present a "sujeto sujetado" (a subject that is created and constrained) by powerful forces in society, in his later works he makes it clear that "power operates only over free subjects, insofar as they are free" (Foucault 2003a: 139). Moreover, Foucault explains that "it would be impossible for power relations to exist without points of insubordination that, by definition, are means of escape" (Foucault 2003a: 143). Judith Butler (1992) builds on this possibility of escape by posing that relations of power need to be constantly repeated, that subjectification is a never-ending process. Although Butler initially does not seem to recognize the need to collectively engage in these processes, I believe that these repetitions of acts of defiance to relations of oppression can only impact social constructions when enacted by organized and conscious populations.

[xxxvi] It is interesting to note that although the welfare plans were distributed only to those who accepted to work 4 hours a day, 5 days a week for only $ 50.00 a month, the piqueteros who accepted those plans were still considered lazy people who did not want to work.

[xxxvii] While mostly it is men who exert power-over in leftist centralized organizations, some women do so to. However, although these women might be as violent and controlling as men who perform leftist macho hegemonic masculinity, because their power performances are embodied in a feminine body, they constitute a certain kind of femininity and cannot be described as a kind of masculinity.

[xxxviii] I have documented this event through three different sources, but in order to protect the identity of those involved, I will avoid providing references.

[xxxix] Although "son of a whore" is a common insult in Argentina (as in other parts of the world) it still indexes to hegemonic masculinity conceptions of the social and to patriarchal moral values. Social movements within the field of politics by other means, for the most part, avoid this term, especially in public chants.

[xl] In Chapter III, under "The Problems", I discuss how hegemonic masculinity was one of the causes behind the struggles that in many cases brought some of these movements down.

[xli] A die-in is a form of protest in which people lie on the floor as if they were dead.

[xlii] Soon after the Massacre, and as consequence of it, the CAV went through a major split, out of which a new organization, the Movimiento de Trabajadores Desocupados Anibal Verón (MTD Anibal Verón) appeared.

CHAPTER II

NATIVE ANTHROPOLOGIST? ISSUES OF POWER IN THE GLOBAL FIELD

The focus of my research has been the reverberations of the 2001 Argentine economic crisis, as they affected and were responded to by women and social movements, and I connect this past crisis with the present global crisis. In the wake of an economic, political and social upheaval, many Argentine social movements organized their constituencies in what I have defined as the field of politics by other means, following M. Foucault's notion of politics as the continuation of war by other means (Foucault 2003b; Davidson 2003). Foucault argued that, contrary to Von Clausewitz dictum that war was the continuation of politics, politics, in fact, was war by other means. Thinking of society as force relations that clash against each other, Foucault highlighted violence within Western political processes. Although he identified "powers of freedom" (Rose 1999) as the power to create and administer life in liberal democracies, Foucault is conscious of the deathly powers of contemporary democracies: "massacres have become vital" (Foucault 1990). While during Medieval Ages the power to kill —sovereign power— was exercised to protect the sovereign's body and authority, today's massacres are enacted in the name of protecting the population. Thus, biopower, the power to allow and administer life, often meets with sovereign power, as under neoliberalism, citizenship and rights are unequally conferred (Ong 2006). The unemployed in Argentina, left out of the markets, were deemed as non-citizens. Victims of a biopower that would only create the conditions for the lives of those necessary for production and distribution of resources, the unemployed, excluded from the markets, suffered under sovereign power as their protests were brutally repressed and many of them killed by the State. Indeed,

theirs was a case which fell under a "zone of indistinction", where it was difficult to determine which power was at stake (Dean 2002).

In response to this situation, the social movements of my study, bearing the brunt of the structural violence that ensued as a result of the application of the International Monetary Fund economic plans, engaged in widespread direct actions against those deemed as agents of neoliberalism. In the context of failed governmental programs and discourse designed to create docile, mobile subjects, egalitarian social movements organized their constituency through non-hierarchical power structures, which fostered peaceful radical, non-hegemonizing performances of political femininities and masculinities that contrasted with the violent methods of the hierarchical organizations of the past. Deeply committed to prefigurative politics, these egalitarian movements are spaces of diversity and contestation, where traditional gender roles can be changed or reinforced, while they create economies of solidarity through small microenterprises that support their membership and empower women.

These social movements are mainly organized around the rejection of neoliberal policies, which many people in Argentina identify as originating, for the most part, in the United States. Although born and raised in Argentina, the United States is now my country of residency as well as the place where my studies take place. Aware that this is an important item to take into account when analyzing the dynamics in my research, I soon noticed that to try to decode exactly what it meant to do research in Argentina, as a native Argentinean who had voluntarily moved out to the United States, would involve more complexities than just stating that I was aware of the imbalances brought forward by my residency and place of study. Although the positionality of my subjects of study

and my own were most prominently displayed in my concerns about power imbalances in our relations, I soon became aware that I also had to take a look at other processes that had constituted my own subjectivity, beyond moving to a country envisioned by many Argentine social movements as at least partially responsible for their widespread pain.

This issue forced me to take a look at my own subjectivity, and how both researcher and researched relate to each other in our globalized world. While I chose to write an ethnographic account of my experiences with these movements, I also had to acknowledge that ethnography as a methodology in social studies had undergone deep transformations and was encountering some systematic critiques that could not be ignored. I had to come to terms, as well, with issues of knowledge production in feminist epistemologies, as well as issues of exploitation of women by women in academic work. For that end, I place my research within the literature of feminist epistemologies and ethnography to analyze issues of positionality, class, and education in the research agenda, fieldwork and post-fieldwork representation.

Ethnographic research has for some time been the locus of heated debates, which stem from discussions about what anthropology itself is. Clifford Geertz launched a new era in anthropological methodology when he wrote that anthropology is "not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning (1973: 5)", almost an art to interpret cultures. According to Lila Abu-Lughod (1990), this opened two different lines in anthropology. On the one hand, "reflexive anthropology", which interprets the data we "find" during our fieldwork as the result of a production of "facts" through the anthropologist interaction with the "subjects" of research[xliii]. The other line opened by Geertz critique focused mainly on the post-field work, the writing of

ethnography, although Geertz himself did not address this facet of ethnography making. James Clifford and George Marcus (1986) wrote what constituted only the first systematic effort to question the legitimacy of the anthropological representation of the "other" through ethnographic accounts. Clifford and Marcus highlighted the power differentials between subjects in the field and academics in the West, by observing "how realism and the transparent language of objectivity were used to assert the authority of the narrator/anthropologist in the classic ethnographies (Lughod 1990)"[xliv].

Building on this critique, Judith Stacey (1991 and 1994) questioned the possibility of a feminist ethnography and cautioned against friendly methodologies, such as feminists' quest for closeness with informants, that had the potential of exploiting our "subjects" even more than positivist methods. Stacey seems here to be thinking of academic work as something that only benefits the academic who is conducting the research. If the aim of the academic is only to publish her own work and thus secure a space for her in the academia, then one can honestly doubt that there is real friendship between the ethnographer and the community member. However, feminism is, above all, research for women, and feminist ethnographers engage in this process because they want to improve the lot of women, just as Stacey herself does, even if there are academic interests at play. Furthermore, if the objectives of the research are made clear to the "subject" of research, and the "subject" is free to collaborate or not, then I see no exploitation, although there are power imbalances in the relationship. It is not possible for the ethnographer to change all of those power imbalances, which stem from structural inequalities that the researcher might want to change, but cannot do so on her own. But the feminist ethnographer can address those imbalances and adopt a methodology that

unveils them rather than hide them. In this sense, contributions by postcolonial subjects were of capital importance to understand the role of ethnography in colonialism.

A few years after Geertz published his seminal critique of anthropological research, the discipline had to come to terms with its colonial past and uncertain future. Building on Geertz notions of anthropology as a quest for interpretation and meaning, rather than a description of facts, Edward Said, a Palestinian with Foucaultian influences, described ethnography as imperialism (1978, 1989). He contended that all studies of the East were tainted by European political domination, aided by anthropologists who interpreted non-Western cultural processes in ethnocentric ways. Western scholars appropriated and exoticized the ideas, language, and culture of the East, deeming the Eastern cultures as "other". Framed within the context of colonial oppression, the academic construction of the Eastern other worked to justify domination and violence.

As neoliberalisms' practices and cultural processes shaped a new global reality, the changing nature of capitalism forced anthropologists to reconsider the meaning of fieldwork and culture in a world that could no longer decode culture as single, bounded within fixed territories, with one single national language (James Clifford 1992). To add on to the already embattled field of ethnographic research, it appeared that ethnographic work, which had so far been deemed as only possible when focused in one place, for an extended period of time, perhaps did not make much sense in the globalized, interconnected postmodern world, where the notion of place was being increasingly contested, as masses migrated in ethnic flows throughout different continents. As Clifford notes, the increasing movement of people around the world has not only put into question the idea of a single-sited ethnography, but has highlighted the need for the

anthropologist to travel and do ethnography as she travels, accomplishing what Marcus' termed a multi-sited ethnography (1995).

Although not connected with global migration trends, my own ethnographic work is multi-sited in that I have done participant observation in several different movements, although I have defined them as part of a certain field, that of politics by other means. I will address the notion of field later on in this dissertation, but I want to focus this chapter on the different loci of my research, as I engage in a self-reflexive analysis of my seven year long research, which included long term participation (from 2002 to 2005) with a coalition of unemployed worker organizations, Movimiento de Trabajadores Desocupados (MTD) Anibal Verón, particularly the MTD Lanus, MTD Almirante Brown and MTD Solano, as well as with two movements in the south of Argentina: MTD Cipoletti, and MTD Allen. Strongly geared toward direct action to oppose IMF inspired governmental policies that led to their exclusion from formal markets, these egalitarian organizations also group unemployed workers through the construction of small microenterprises that fulfill membership needs, such as manufacturing of clothing, shoes, distribution of food, and other items of first necessity.

My interest in these movements originated in my viewing their organizations as potential examples of struggles for democracy, against neoliberal policies of exclusion and dispossession (Harvey 2005). In an effort to disseminate their work, I not only participated in these movements, but I also spent two months touring internationally with one of the leaders of this organization, Neka. I also participated in the MTD La Matanza and traveled for over a month with one of their leaders, Soledad. Earlier, I had built my puppet show about Argentine social movements at the Asamblea del Cid. This popular

assembly had occupied an abandoned bank to use as a meeting space for neighbors and social movements to organize in defense of their threatened livelihoods. They encouraged us to use their space to build the show. This allowed me to become familiar with the power structure of the Asamblea, as I interacted with them daily during three months. In 2007, I spent a month doing participant observation (PO) and factory work at La Nueva Esperanza, whose workers had taken over an abandoned factory, and spent 10 days in Mexico at a conference with one of La Nueva Esperanza's workers. From 2007 to 2009, I spent six month visiting with different social movements organized against the exploitation of natural resources by multinational corporations, including two movements within the Union de Asambleas Ciudadanas (UAC): the Asamblea Ciudadana Ambiental de Gualeguaychú and the UAC Regional Capital. During that time, I also researched and participated in several smaller movements, some of which could be loosely described as spin-off of the popular assembly movement, most of them in Buenos Aires: the Olla and the Mesa de Escrache, the latter functioning out of the Asamblea de Villa Urquiza. Another movement that could be associated with the popular assembly movements is La Sala and the Huerta Orgazmika, two interconnected spaces that were originally the popular assembly Gastón Riva, also in Buenos Aires. Finally, I also interviewed several times, in Buenos Aires, a woman from Santa Fe, member of the Asamblea Permanente de Afectados por la Inundación (APAI) whose membership protest the lack of governmental support for victims of a Katrina style flood in the interior of Argentina.

At the same time I was doing my research, I created an organization to support non-hierarchical social movements in Argentina. I organized several visits of

US/European scholars, students and community members to these movements, and I invited some of the women leaders to tour the United States and the UK with me.

These visits opened up a number of opportunities for the social movements I was working with. For example, Carmen, a worker in a recovered factory, was invited to Mexico to be part of a panel I had organized on women and globalization for an activist/academic conference. Earlier, I had invited Neka and Soledad from MTD Solano and MTD La Matanza to tour the United States —twice with Neka and once with Soledad. Neka and I also spent a month touring the UK. These presentations were mainly at Universities and colleges, especially in the United States, and it was challenging for these women who spoke no English, to interact with academics and upper middle class, white people. For the most part, they were in need of emotional and cultural support. We became quite close, and this emotional bond helped me in more than one way while I was trying to figure out what was going on in their movements. Although no other international travels were involved, I had long term friendships with several of my other informants, and was even the co-founder of a much earlier incarnation of one of the movements I researched, whose name and connections with myself I have disguised to protect my friends' identities.

To understand my own impact on the research I will develop reflexive account of my life, my work, and my positionality, within the theoretical framework of a Foucaultian analysis of power (Foucault 2003c:309). Foucault's thoughts helped me understand issues of power and hierarchy within social movements themselves because in his theory, power is everywhere and held not only by the state, but present in every social institution, social relationships, and practices. For him, modern relations of power are

implemented through technologies of the self that operate through the individuals. Thus, all human relations are traversed by power, as the "state is superstructural in relation to a whole series of power networks that invest the body, sexuality, the family, kinship, knowledge, technology and so forth" (Foucault 2003c: 309). Thus, power is "rooted in a whole series of multiple and indefinite power relations" (Foucault 2003c: 309) which include, of course, the relation between the ethnographer and her subjects, as well as the relations among the members of the community or site of research.

Consequently, I will strive to clarify the power dynamics of my fieldwork as a feminist anthropologist who was born, raised and trained in philosophy in Argentina, and is completing her studies in the United States as an anthropologist. In order to place myself in my research, I will first need to position my research within the field of feminism. As a feminist anthropologist, I need to analyze how my discipline intersects with feminism and what that intersection means in my own practice.

Who Gets to Know What

Within the academy, feminist thinkers developed a critique of social sciences aimed at what was called the male bias or androcentric perspective (Abu-Lughod 1990). Although this first wave of feminists did not question the idea of objectivity itself, soon scholars began to publish papers in which they linked notions of objectivity to notions of masculinity. Evelyn Fox Keller (1982), most prominently, argued that the bipolarity built into notions of masculine/feminine informs notions of objectivity. Objectivity is linked to the detachment of the personal from scientific work and it is based on reason as opposed to feelings and personal interests. Objectivity is understood as scientific and

male, while subjectivity is envisioned as female, soft, and messy (Catharine MacKinnon 1982, 1983).

Nancy Hartsock (1997) built on this critique of objectivity by conceptualizing standpoint theory. Hartsock claims that in order to understand oppression and inequality and to build a strong objectivity to understand our society, we must take the standpoint of the oppressed. This theory constitutes an adaptation of traditional Marxism, which identifies the proletariat as the subject of social change. It is from the bottom of the social scale that we can look at power relations as they are (Mohanty 2003:232). Standpoint theory was articulated as a critique to Marxist theory, given that this theory, before feminist Marxists' intervention, was considered gender blind (Young 1980), and did not account fully for the way that women could understand the world. However, standpoint theory did something more than just add women to Marxist critique of capitalism. In Nancy Hartsock's articulation, standpoint became an epistemological tool to "understand patriarchal institutions and ideologies as perverse inversions of more human social relations (1997:463)". Standpoint theory, in time, became the site of theoretical power struggles, as an important number of feminists of color and postmodern thinkers independently questioned the validity of the universal category woman, which implied an essence that is common to all women[xlv]. Feminists of color elaborated on a different, yet connected theory, intersectionality (Patricia Hill Collins 1990) that proposes we analyze the intersection of gender, race, class and other axes of oppression/resistance to understand the different systems of discrimination at play in society. Leslie McCall (2005) analyzes intersectionality from three different perspectives: anticategorical approaches, intracategorical and intercategorical. Anticategorical approaches are the

ones held by postmoderns and poststructuralists, such as Julia Kristeva (1986), Helene Cixous (1976), Luce Irigaray (1985) and Butler (1990, 1992, 1997a, 1997b, and 2004b). While the anticategorial approach denies the usefulness of what they understand to be essentializing categories, such as "woman", the intracategorical approach, recognizing that the category woman is abstract, strategically essentializes certain "identity groups" such as Latinas. This group includes Patricia Hill Collins (1990), María Lugones (1997) and Paula Moya (1997). The intercategorical approach, on the other hand, does not essentialize "Latinas", but strategically essentializes categories of oppression/resistance. McCall herself positions herself in this group, along with Chandra Talpade Mohanty (2003), who uses categories such as Third World Women to conclude that although there is diversity within this group, they all share in structural oppression. That is, women in the Third World are not expected to be the same, but they all exist under the oppression of the First World.

Thinkers within the anticategorical approach, on the other hand, reject the use of universal categories altogether. In their approach, not only "woman" as a concept is problematic, but also "categories of true sex, discrete gender and specific sexuality (Butler 1997: 113)" commonly used by standpoint theorists, crumbled under Judith Butler's critique. Butler wrote a controversial and groundbreaking essay, Gender Trouble (1990), in which she argued against the naturalness of the body, sex, and dual gender. For Butler, the body and sex are not pre-discursive facts, but rather the sites of cultural inscription, through which what is the body and what is outside the body is culturally constructed, creating the fantasy of a subject with an inner core, whose true sexuality and true gender have been determined by his/her own soul. For Butler, the

body, sex, and gender are socially constructed and performative. Gender is constituted by repeated performances that create the illusion of an identity behind it, but for Butler, there is no doer, just deeds, there are no fixed identities behind that repetition (Butler 1997: 123). This leads her to the conclusion that rocked the feminist studies world: there is no "we" that can justify identity politics. The task, for Butler, is to perform acts of transgression of gender bipolarity. Gayatri Spivak (1988) acknowledges Butler's critique of identity, but advises us to deploy those essentialized categories in strategic ways. However, Spivak herself calls attention to the many dangers involved in this strategic essentializing, which sometimes might veil real, politically motivated essentialisms (Spivak 1993).

Donna Haraway articulated a critique of certain versions of standpoint theory. She holds the position that the "topography of subjectivity is multidimensional" (Haraway 1988b: 193), because the subject has no core inner self, or identity, but is the result of various social processes and constructions. The subject is, consequently, multiple. For Haraway "there is no immediate vision" (Haraway 1988b: 193) that stems from subjugation[xlvi], but rather a way of looking that requires the elaboration of a scientific, informed, critical positioning, from which a partial knowledge can be claimed, what Haraway calls "feminist objectivity" (Haraway 1988b: 193). Her approach has been termed constructed standpoint (Pritsch 2004).

Chizu Sato (2004), following Haraway, elaborates on the concept of situated knowledge which explains that our vision is always partial and stems from a certain location, and complicates identity politics by claiming that in today's world, research will necessarily have to address the "possible partial, fluid and contradictory positionalities of

the researcher and, by extension, the possible partial, fluid and contradictory positionalities of the informants" (Sato 2004:101). Building on these nuanced and multiple positionalities, she goes on to identify interconnected dimensions of power at play in the research agenda such as the power that stems from the different positionality of the research and researched; that connected with unequal exchanges between researcher and researched, power over the representation in the post fieldwork-writing period[xlvii], and finally, power to set the research agenda (Clifford and Marcus 1986).

Sato's analysis of the power relations that traverse our research can be traced to Foucault's analysis of power, in that Sato is addressing forces that although operating within the mega-framework of state power, are structured beyond it, in the everyday relations of subjects. The Western researcher has been imbued by the academy with the capacity to produce truth, that is, power. Truth, in Foucault, "is intrinsically bound to apparatuses like the prison, the hospital, the school, and the clinic" (Rabinow et al 2003: ix) who produce knowledge through their practices and practitioners. The academic researcher is certainly somebody with the capacity to exercise power and produce truth about the subjects of her research, which explains the need for an exhaustive self-reflexive analysis such as Sato develops in her study.

To this end, and drawing on Kirin Narayan (1997), she explains that the researcher has a "multiplex subjectivity" (Sato 2004:102) just as the subjects of her research do. These multiple subjectivities are the result of the different material and discursive process that subjects go through, processes that not all individuals marked within racial, political/geographical, or gender categories, necessarily have gone through. That is, a human being's life is not only determined by these broad categories of

oppression/resistance, but also by subjective process connected with private lives, with childhood experiences, and with different intersubjective interactions. The postmodern turn in social studies, particularly in its psychoanalytical version[xlviii], points to the fractured nature of our beings, as it operates with the concept of subjectivity that implies a denial of fixed, permanent identities (McCall 2005). Through the denial of the existence of fixed identities, the concept of multiplex subjectivity avoids identity politics and the resulting division of what should constitute the diverse field of the oppressed, by showing that within these broad categories of race, gender, and political/geographical locations there are multiple subject positions from which different individuals reinscribe meanings to their lives. Instead of competing over the status of "the most oppressed", and thus, whose viewpoint should be embraced, the concept of multiplex subjectivities allows for alliances based on affinities and partial, overlapping subject positions, without losing sight of structures of oppression.

It is important to reinforce this last idea. Categories such as race and gender are socially constructed. They are also, in a sense, very real. As Ian Hacking explains, social constructions can also have a "looping effect" (Hacking 1999: 34). As people become aware of how they are envisioned and described by society, an adaptation is likely to occur. A person or a group can either change certain behaviors that led to a certain "social" label, or become entrenched in those behaviors. Hacking also explains that social constructions such as gender have very clear material effects on people's lives. Indeed, these categories are present in all social interactions, and are at the base of social discrimination (Alexander and Mohanty 1997). Even when our own analysis abhors these categories, it seems that we must not only deconstruct them, but also as Spivak

suggests, strategically deploy them (Spivak 1988) as we struggle for a world free of oppression and its categories[xlix].

Who Gets to Design the Research Agenda and Tell the Story?

The concept of postcoloniality does not imply that coloniality is over[l]. Rather, the concept of postcoloniality describes the situation that emerged when, in the past century, colonial powers were confronted both politically and theoretically, throughout the world. Out of this struggle, the voices of those who had been silenced for centuries emerged, to critique the construction of colonial knowledges and speak up for themselves. Racist, gendered, and sexist discourses in social studies fields were questioned by non-Western authors such as Franz Fanon and Edward Said, and by critical Western thinkers such as Simone de Beauvoir, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Michel Foucault, among others. In the field of anthropology, specifically, the entrance of non-Western authors into the academy allowed for a new subject position to emerge: the "native" anthropologist.

However, the concept of "native" and what this allows in terms of knowledge production is complex and nuanced, especially if one takes into account power differentials that exist within the global south. Diana Wolf (1996:14) builds on Kirin Narayan to suggest that having experienced oppression as a co-national (or same race, gender, or class) of the researched in the context of global power imbalances *might* help the anthropologist establish rapport and better understand the circumstances of the researched. She argues that Haraway's concept of politics and epistemology of locations "not only allows and encourages feminist researchers to bring their own particular location and position into the research, to acknowledge and build on their partial

[situated] perspective, but makes it imperative for them to do so before any discussion of another's reality can be introduced" (Wolf 1996:14).

Following this analysis, I can assert that because I share my nationality with my informants, I have gone through similar economic and social-cultural processes to those they have gone through. However, this does not account for other imbalances in our relation, such as my living in what is viewed in Latin America largely as the "belly of the beast", as well as my capacity to go back to the U.S. to work other (more humane and protected) jobs. Our shared nationality does not account, either, for my own particular class background and academic education[li].

It was important to take these issues into account, because although I am a "native" Argentine, I do hold dual citizenship, having moved to the United States 16 years ago. To make power issues in my research even more complicated, I myself embody what can be defined as a multiplex subjectivity (Narayan 1997). I was not totally new to factory work, but it had been a while. I am the child of the owner of a small factory in Buenos Aires. In the seventies, my father employed three men, paid them shabbily and treated them in unfair ways. The surplus value they produced in the dark workshop below my home funded my education and general upkeep. However, although I was getting an upper middle class education in a private elementary English school in Buenos Aires, upon returning from school, many times a week I would be forced to dip my hands in machine oil and steel chips, at times hurting my fingers which would become infected, and always bearing perpetually black fingernails. At age twelve, along with my mother, an ex-domestic worker, the child of migrant fieldworkers, I was also helping to load and unload trucks. At age fourteen, I had to combine all of this with

office work, until I left home at 18. Later, my family's financial situation deteriorated, as my father owned one of the many small industries that did not survive the first onslaught of neoliberalism in the late seventies.

Once I gained independence from my parents, I became an activist and scholar in philosophy at the University of Buenos Aires (UBA). Finding that philosophy helped me understand the world but not communicate my knowledge to folks outside the academy, I engaged in street and community theater, which landed me in the United States, to work with the Bread and Puppet Theater. Later on, I earned a Master of Fine Arts, and I have recently defended my dissertation in Anthropology. This background shows clearly that my research was plagued by power imbalances that I would have to sort out as I interacted with my informants and friends.

My informants and friends also embodied partially overlapping multiplex subjectivities, the results of the various processes and experiences that they had gone through. The workers of La Nueva Esperanza, for example, went from underpaid factory workers, to unemployed, to empowered workers recovering their own workspace, to collective owners of means of production and employers of part-time helpers, in the context of a globalized economy and local/global neoliberal economic, cultural and political practices. In that same context, some of the unemployed workers also had complicated class trajectories. Soledad, for example, is an upper middle class woman in her fifties who fell in love with an unemployed worker organizer, Toti Flores, left her posh job as an administrator in the Argentine Senate and moved to La Juanita. La Juanita is one of the poorest neighborhoods of La Matanza, outside of the city of Buenos Aires. Toti, an ex-Trotskyist and member of the Central Committee of the Movimiento al

Socialismo (MAS), founded the MTD La Matanza and Soledad became one of the leaders of that organization. Neka from MTD Solano, on the other hand, has a life history quite different from Soledad's but not less nuanced. The daughter of a large, poor family of the interior of the country, Neka first became active in social activities through the Catholic Church while she earned a degree in Psychotherapy. Not long after that, she fell in love with a priest, Alberto, who had been a prominent member of the Movimiento Todos por la Patria, a center left political party. Alberto, Neka, and several other Third World catholic activists eventually started organizing unemployed workers and were expelled from the Church. After meeting with a group of intellectuals from the UBA, the Colectivo Situaciones (Situaciones from now on), their politics began to shift towards Autonomism. This shift in their politics, and a book they co-edited with Situaciones granted them international attention. When I met her, Neka had been touring Europe for several months, raising funds for their organization, MTD Solano. Florencia, one of the leaders of MTD Lanus, had a history somewhat similar to that of Soledad, in that she is also an upper-middle class woman, with training as an artist and scholar at the University of Buenos Aires. Her involvement with social movements was previous to her relationship with Pablo, an important leader of the MTD Lanus, as it stemmed from the years of her activism at the School of Philosophy and Literature at the University of Buenos Aires. Eventually Pablo and Florencia moved to La Fe, a shanty-town where they helped a number of people take over lands to build modest homes as they created the MTD Lanus. The life histories of my middle class friends in the different popular assembly movements were perhaps less striking, and not so different from my own experiences. However, my move to the United States, as well as my doctoral studies at a

US University generated a number of tensions and imbalances that made our relationship perhaps not less complicated than the one I have with the unemployed workers.

Since my background is that of a middle class woman born and raised in Argentina, but now a US citizen, it is evident that there is more power in my positionality than in theirs, given that they live in a country that does not have the resources that the United States have. Furthermore, I have acquired more formal education than they have, which would increase my own power, in general. However, this played out in different ways in the different settings where I was doing research. Inside the factory, for example, my education in the humanities and social sciences was not of much use, so in that sense, they had more power since they knew how to work in the factory and I did not. Moreover, I was physically weaker in the job than any of them. Although my education and positionality allowed me more life choices than they had, within the factory my education in social studies was of little use, while their knowledge of the production process, their physical strength and their shared history in recovering the factory inverted our roles. Inside the factory I was an almost useless worker, to whom even the most obvious tasks had to be explained and who lacked the physical strength in which most of them excelled. One hot sunny afternoon, for example, I asked Malvina, in charge of the printing section, if I could help her. She looked at me and said "You will faint, it's so hot in here". Although I did not faint, I ruined so many balloons that I voluntarily moved to an "easier task" section the next day.

Also, my ability to leave the factory and return to the United States, if I so desired, was not entirely an asset that would help balance our relationship; rather, if anything, it highlighted the fact that within the factory I was a guest, one that outside the

factory could help them establish important international relations, but nevertheless a guest, with no power to make decisions in that space.

The fact that my positionality and citizenship turned me into almost an outsider did not work completely against me, I believe. As I helped organize a conference on Worker's Economy with the University of Buenos Aires, many anthropologists found out about my research, and two women approached me. As it turned out, they were having many issues and did not feel they were getting much data out of their participant observation at La Nueva Esperanza. The workers were becoming increasingly tired of all the attention they were receiving in academic circles, and were beginning to close up. As Eva and Norma said to me: "We are tired of talking about the same thing. You can come and work here, but we will not be interviewed". They were not willing to be interviewed and did not want to be interrupted with questions while they were working. My friendship with Carmen, the invitation to Mexico, and the respect I had earned from Eva, and all the other workers at the factory, was built in part through my capacity to give them an international spotlight, and not so much by my hard efforts doing factory work alongside with them, since the anthropologists that had been almost rejected in the factory had also put in a good amount of factory work, but were not able to engage the workers in their research. In sum, they were more interested in taking time to talk with me because they felt our relationship would strengthen their struggle, while probably they could not see how they would benefit from spending time with local anthropologists.[lii]

To add even more complexity to the situation, they had allowed for a few foreigner researchers to do participant observation before I got there. Several of the workers commented that they thought I would do a better job at describing their work and

their organization because I spoke the same language, without an accent, and also because I understood Argentine slang, drank mate (our national tea), and was acquainted with the neighborhood, where I had lived until I moved to the US. Paz, who was sitting with Carmen having lunch said: "It is nicer to talk with Graciela. She can understand us and we understand her. It was not much fun with Lorena". Carmen reminded her that I was Argentine, and Lorena was a Canadian student. Paz knew this, but in her mind, I was almost a foreigner. Her comment somehow sums up the situation: a native, but not quite…

The equality or lack thereof of our exchange was also complex. For the most part I provided (mostly unqualified) labor and numerous international contacts, by way of the international delegations I have been organizing for many years. In the spring of 08, for example, a group of 26 students and two faculty members from the University of Massachusetts visited the Cooperativa and other social organizations in Argentina. This visit, as many others by international scholars and journalists, allowed them to reach broader, global, audiences that support their struggle. In exchange, I learned how power works within an organization that tends to egalitarianism and had a first hand experience of the workings of gender in such an institution. This knowledge, which will in time be the matter of papers and books, has the potential to help me solidify a privileged position as part of the United States academy.

To PAR or not to PAR…

Had funding been available for this project, and had the workers been interested in researching into the gender structure of their factory, I would have engaged in a full-blown Participant Action Research[liii] project with the workers on every step of the

research process (Henderson 1995). However, given the time and funding constraints that I encountered, as well as the workers' lack of interest in my research topic, I settled for a methodology that addressed some of the issues of power in the field, if not all. Feminism is not something that women are born with, but rather a political position that both women and men can work on through consciousness raising workshops, collective and personal analysis. The fact that the workers of La Nueva Esperanza are not concerned with a feminist agenda does not mean that it is not important to look at their organization and power dynamics from that viewpoint. If I had given up on my own feminist agenda, and re-designed my own research according to their interest, I would not have been able to at least attempt a modest contribution to the understanding of how gender roles are made in egalitarian spaces, and how these spaces offer a way to contest traditional gender roles, something I could not have researched in a PAR project in this particular setting, given the lack of interest of the workers.

My prioritizing of my own agenda over their non-stated diverging interest does not mean that I was not respectful of how the workers wanted to represent themselves. When I returned to the United States, I wrote a version of this paper to present at an international meeting of scholars and workers of Recovered Factories in Buenos Aires. Before I presented the paper, I visited my old friends at La Nueva Esperanza and highlighted for them the sections of the paper that contained ethnographic data for them to read and comment. I was relieved to see that they were interested and approving of what I had written about them. However, I do not delude myself into thinking that I gave voice to these people, since I had the power to edit, write and contextualize our exchanges. I bear in mind that "[t]he feminist researcher must not ignore the power that

is inherent in her own assumption of ability to grant voice to the "othered" (Hesse-Biber 2004a: 215) and I would add she should be wary of not recognizing her own input in the process. As a US trained feminist, I have an analysis of gender relations that the workers themselves do not have. In the early stages of my research, for example, the women told me that they wanted to ask the ex-personnel manager to become the president of the coop. Since so far the women had been mostly in control of what was going on, I thought this would be a set back for them, as they would be placing a man on top. However, as Claudia told me: "There is too much 'confianza' (trust) between us. They will pay attention to him. They respect him". The women were conscious that the workers (both male and female) would pay more attention to this person, thus making the working conditions easier for everybody, since they were facing many problems when trying to get the male workers to follow their guidelines. Common replies to their requests included: "Do it yourself!" or "I don't feel like it". The women did not have a gender analysis; their interest was in getting the factory to be productive and did not care that it would take not only a man to get the job accomplished, but also a man who had previously worked for "the man" —the owner of the factory. Likewise, around this same time, Eva explained to me that they were considering hiring somebody to do the job of lifting a heavy tray with balloon molds and hold it over a chemical bath. Because the job requires much strength, Eva said that they were going to hire a man. Since Eva and I had also discussed that the men in the factory were not paying attention to their directives, I asked her if they had considered that the job might get done by two women, instead, increasing in that way the likelihood of establishing with them a relationship of mutual respect. Without missing a beat, Eva told me: "Maybe, but two women would cost the

coop double what it would cost for one man to do the job". This, of course, not only put and end to that conversation, but also rather highlighted the fact that I had made that recommendation without an integrated analysis of gender as it connects with material needs.

My participant observation in the unemployed worker movement was different in that, other than touring with some of the leaders, I only attended meetings and participated in the direct actions. I did not have a semi-permanent presence in their movement as I did in the factory. However, the power differentials became evident here as well. For example, I was invited to present my puppet show about Argentine social movements on the first anniversary of the Massacre of the Avellaneda, when hundreds of unemployed workers were repressed and two were killed during a road blockade. The show, made out of recycled materials, was presented at the "bloquera", the brick building microenterprise that had been created by Dario Santillán, one of the youth slain. This was a two-day event, and hundreds of people gathered to play music, sing, eat and spend the night so that the next day, immediately after the puppet show we could all march to former President Duhalde's home for an direct action. Duhalde, President at the time of the Massacre, was widely considered the intellectual author of the attack although the courts had only arraigned the police officer in charge that day. Although I had been interacting intensively with this movement, on that day there were many people from other movements that came to support their struggle. Thus, I found myself chatting with people I had never met before. Although Pablo and Florencia introduced me as a *compañera*, several people there kept calling me *señora*. Compañera is a word that originates in Latin and means "to share bread". It is a term widely used in Argentina and

Latin American's leftist and center left politics as it indexes to a woman who is an equal, who struggles with you, who shares a political stance with you. For example, in Chile, Salvador Allende was the "compañero Presidente", which pointed to his double role as a comrade who had the responsibility and the privilege to lead the Nation. I was given no such distinction by some of the unemployed workers gathered there. They simply called me "señora", madam. With this simple word, a world of differences was brought to light. My skin color —white; my class origin —middle class; my positionality —US citizen, turned me into a "señora" —an outsider. Although I managed to have them call me "*compañera"* after I complained of this treatment, on that particular day I did not manage to turn around their perception of myself as an outsider, which was aggravated by the fact that Naomi Klein's team, whom I had met and was collaborating with, was there to film my puppet show and the direct action. However, with the MTD members that I interacted most, I was able to become a "*compañera*" as time went by and I continued to visit them, by myself and with activists from the United States and Europe, and continued to support their struggle through my international contacts.

Although this time the performance of the puppet show did not help me much in establishing horizontal connections with unemployed workers, my connections with the MTDs were aided by the production of art. In 2003, and through support from the Fences and Windows Foundation, I conducted a puppet-building workshop with ten members of MTD Solano. The workshop lasted a month and during that time we were able to talk and get to know each other in ways that had not been possible before. As we were building puppets, I gathered information that had not been offered before, especially data connected with long-term conflicts in the organization. Not long after that, MTD Solano

began a long and painful process of deterioration, which led to angry accusations of mismanagement of funds, many splits and even physical violence. My participation in that workshop helped me build connections with women like Ana, who were not leaders in the organization. My friendship with Ana proved valuable later, as she was able to explain to me what the issues were, from a different perspective than that offered by Neka, one of the questioned leaders.

Friendship in the Field: Too Close for Comfort?

The feminist researcher should be wary to not exploit other women (or men!) through her friendly, feminist methods (Stacy 1991). My own experience in the field confirms that friendly feminist methods can and have open venues for trust which can result in people sharing much more information than they would when faced with arguably more masculine, or positivist, methods. Does this mean that women should adopt more masculine (positivist) methods? For one thing, if Stacy were right, we would gather less data that way. Answering to her many critics, Stacey (1994), advised us to acknowledge the limits of our potential to find data, to engage our subjects in our research and to acknowledge that our work is intrusive. However, sometimes our interest as researchers does not align with the interest of those we research. It is clear, then, that it is not always possible for academics to engage our subjects in our research. Since a feminist agenda was not a concern for the factory workers of La Nueva Esperanza, the unemployed workers, or the member of the UAC, this was not really an option for me. I think Stacey, who articulated a powerful critique of the risks of exploitation of our subjects, does not go far enough in trying to set a limit to that exploitation[liv]. An option would be to be friendly, but take this friendship to a different level, and turn ourselves

into advocates for our subjects, push our academic institutions into bringing women from the battlefields of globalization to talk directly to our students and our faculty, open keynote spaces for them in our conferences, and start establishing non-hierarchical dialogues with those we research. Such actions would help us tremendously in dealing with issues of post-fieldwork representation. Although academics have analyses that do not always coincide with the analyses of those we research, it would be productive for all if we could establish spaces for such an exchange, since it would, at the least, help minimize misperceptions, prejudices, and sheer ignorance of practices and cultural norms of those we are interested in, and whose oppressive conditions we wish to change.

It was with such an agenda in mind that I invited Soledad and Neka to tour with me in the UK and the US, and that I proposed to the Center for Global Justice that they invite Carmen of La Nueva Esperanza to be part of the conference. Carmen, like many people who participate in academic research projects, she was not without the ability to reinscribe meanings to our interactions, and had her own expectations and agenda, which were not personal but concerned the welfare of the cooperative. I would like to explore our relationship and compare it to Ruth Behar's (1993) relationship with an indigenous Mexican woman, Esperanza, as narrated in Translated Woman (Behar 1993).

Ruth Behar professes a feminist standpoint and methodology in her Latin America based research. As Dorothy Smith (1990) argues, feminists should start research from the very lives of women themselves, something that, traditionally, science had ignored. Behar engages precisely in that process, by working with a woman in the global south, in this case, with a Mexican native woman, a street peddler. Behar, as she explains, engaged in this work from the standpoint of her complex multiplex subjectivity

(Narayan 1997) as a Jewish Cuban-American woman, engaging in self-reflexivity in an exhaustive way. In acknowledging her complex positionality she states "I am a Cubana, but in Mexico I am a gringa, because I go to Mexico with gringa privileges, gringa money, gringa credentials, not to mention a gringo husband and a gringo car." (Behar 1993:321). Behar's acknowledgement of her privilege allows us to glimpse into the complex power dynamics at play in the field. A Latin American immigrant, of Jewish ethnicity, in the United States, a privileged gringa in Mexico, Behar inevitably and regardless of her intentions, towers over Esperanza, who asked the anthropologist and her husband to become *padrinos* of her daughter. The *padrinazgo* is a relationship characterized by the explicit recognition of a hierarchical order, in which the person with more resources takes a child of a poorer family under her protection. When Esperanza requested this from Ruth Behar, she was acknowledging a power imbalance in their relationship, and exploiting this imbalance for her own benefit and that of her family.

Carmen, my friend at the factory, is no Esperanza, and I'm no Ruth Behar. Like most of the Argentine population, although of indigenous descent like Esperanza, my friend is literate and westernized. Furthermore, Behar portrays Esperanza as isolated in her own community, abused and abusive, seeking her redemption through a Pancho Villa centered cult. Carmen, although not a foreigner to mysticism, reorganized her life through collective action, by taking over the factory in which she had been working for over 30 years. As the anticorporate globalization movement was seeking alternatives to neoliberalism, the taking over of factories became of great interest to many people in the industrialized nations. The cooperative that Carmen helped create became an important, albeit small landmark for many people around the world. In other words, Esperanza did

not have the advantages of an international network of activists interested in her work, as Carmen did. This contributed to strengthen Carmen's position when it came to establishing a relationship with me.

As a feminist, I am interested in doing research for women, to contribute to a world where gender boundaries become meaningless. It is important, in that sense that feminist researchers make strategic choices regarding what they are going to research. When a researcher chooses to tell the story of a woman who is abused, like Esperanza, we should ask ourselves if this is what most helps the cause of women, particularly in the global south. What is the effect of telling the story of a woman who instead of engaging in a collective action to stop abusive practices becomes an abuser herself? Does this story help change stereotypical visions of Latin American women[lv]? I chose to tell the story of Carmen and her co-workers because their story offers an alternative to neoliberal practices of exclusion and destruction of communities[lvi]. As Chandra Mohanty (2003) explains, "social movements are crucial sites for the construction of knowledge, communities and identities" (Mohanty 2003:248). Indeed, the fact that Carmen is part of a social movement not only contributed to level the power imbalances in our relationship, but more importantly, it provided a hopeful story that shows that women can and should be leaders of movements to stop the corporate globalization practices that have plunged the global south into deep poverty, and are now negatively affecting the US working and middle classes' economic stability and prospects for the future. As feminists interested in the effects of globalization on women, we can "tell alternate stories of difference, culture, power, agency, and justice" (Mohanty 2003:244). Although Mohanty thinks of this issue

with respect to her own feminist pedagogy, her thought holds true for all efforts in the academy that tend to social change.

In contrast with Behar's status, I am a graduate student, with no gringo husband (with no husband at all for that matter), no gringo car when visiting Argentina, few gringo credentials, and no gringo money (but plenty of gringo student loans darkening the sky of my future). The above is not to deny that I do enjoy some gringa privileges, such as traveling internationally, numerous academic and activist contacts, and a privileged, bilingual education in social studies. I acknowledge, with Diana Wolf (1996:36), that these micro dynamics do not alter the fundamental differences in our positionalities, namely my class, education and location, to which I could return at any given time.

Esperanza, who declined Behar's gift of Translated Woman (Behar 1993) in English, since she would not be able to read it, seemed aware that she would not get much out of her conversations with Behar, and asked for expensive gifts from her gringa comadre[lvii]. Carmen never asked anything material from me perhaps because she was aware of my low-income status in the United States, or most probably because she is a proud worker in a self-managed enterprise. Carmen did express many times a desire to return to Mexico, or to visit other countries as a speaker and representative of her coop and she gave me a thin gold chain to express her gratitude for my invitation to Mexico.

Esperanza had to build a defensive wall of silence to protect her sexuality from being depicted in academic books and journals (Behar 1993:273). Although I never asked Carmen questions that would make her personally uncomfortable, or compromise her in the factory, I did take from her all the gossip she was willing to freely give, since it was of tremendous help to understand the gender and sexual politics of the factory,

whose details and past histories were not always obvious. Her gossip allowed me to frame what I was seeing and helped me orient questions that I asked of other coop members —which I did in crafty ways that did not betray Carmen's trust or exposed our private conversations[lviii].

My exchanges with the other unemployed workers that I traveled with were more or less similar to those I had with Carmen, although Neka and Soledad have more formal education than Carmen, had traveled previously, and in Soledad's case, her class background was higher than mine —all facts that contributed to making our connection more balanced. However, the issues that surrounded my research with the popular assemblies and their spin-off organizations were different. Although my living in the U.S. as a doctoral student set us apart, I shared a similar educational and class background with them, so our exchanges were not as imbalanced as with unemployed worker organizers. Moreover, I had a past as an activist in organizations that were similar to theirs —a fact that contributed to open many doors for me. However, other issues plagued our relationship, as my role as an academic researching in an international context was questioned at different times. Moro, of the UAC Regional Capital, also a member of a centralized organization, the Tupac Amaru, was straightforward about this and asked me how did I feel about academics coming from all over the world to "investigate" them, not giving anything in return. I was able to clear this issue with him, personally, as I assured him that I would give them the notes I had taken during the meetings, translate for them anything that I wrote in English about them, consult with them before publishing, and, finally, that I would share with them my videos and photos of their actions (which I did)[lix]. Other exchanges were traversed as well by this same

issue, but seldom ever brought to light, as I painfully learned through a listserve coordinated by the Mesa de Escrache.

The Mesa de Escrache is composed by a small number of young activists who used to be organized with HIJOS, the children of the disappeared. Following the official pardon by Carlos Menem in 1989 of all the military involved in state terrorism between 1976 and 1983, the children of the disappeared (HIJOS) started organizing "escraches". These mass mobilizations involved street theater and attacks against military officers' private homes, in an effort to isolate these officers in their own barrios. The objective was to alert neighbors of the presence in their neighborhoods of military and police officers who had committed crimes against humanity. For unexplained reasons, some of the activists involved in HIJOS left the organization and started the Mesa de Escrache, with the objective of denouncing through "escraches" people responsible for disappearances and other crimes during the dictatorship who were still active in Argentine society. Having received an open invitation through one of the autonomist listserves, I started attending their meetings in the Asamblea of Villa Urquiza in October 2008. During three months, we met once a week to coordinate a big "escrache", with different movements participating. At the beginning, and responding to that same open invitation, activists from other movements came to talk with them to see how they could join forces, but gradually, the other activists stopped coming. I had never met the activists in the Mesa de Escrache before and felt all the time that my presence was not wanted, although I offered to help build giant puppets to make the "escrache" more visible —something they had mentioned they were interested in. I also offered to establish contacts, as they were desperately trying to establish contacts with "important"

activists to help them with the "escrache", but were not getting responses from these people. Although I thought I was helping, I think that they were somewhat turned off by my having so many contact and knowing many important activists. I was unsure on how to proceed: on the one hand I wanted the "escrache" to happen, for political reasons, but felt all along that my offers were not welcome. After three months of attending meetings every Saturday, and a few evening activities, as less and less people attended, I also stopped going. However, I continued to receive their mailings and one day I read what I had suspected all along. One of the activists, Florencia, wanted to invite a young researcher to their meetings and asked permission from the group. She only got one answer, from another woman, Vivi, who stated that she was sick and tired of foreign researchers coming to Argentina, with their grant dollars or euros to "investigate them", giving nothing in return. Florencia explained in the next email that this person was an Argentine researcher. Since several of them were students of sociology, that put an end to that conversation, but it helped me clarify why they had been so reluctant to talk with me. I had explained, though, that I would give them my transcripts, translate my papers, and obtain their consent before publishing anything, but I imagine that they either did not believe me or did not think this was enough.

I think this illustrates once more how my "native" position was challenged by some of the activists I was researching, especially those whom I had no contact in the past when I was still an activist in Argentina. However, I had full access to other spaces where I was able to either revamp old connections, or was well received after being introduced by older activists. In that sense, doors were wide open for me at Multitudes, the Olla, the UAC, both in Gualeguaychú and in Buenos Aires, and La Sala and Huerta

Orgazmika, where I either knew the activists (as in the Multitudes), or I was introduced by a respected activist, as in the UACs, the Sala and Huerta Orgazmika and the Olla.

In these movements, though, my conflicts were not connected with not having access, but rather with how to articulate my politics and organizational ideas with my role as a researcher. Different authors have encountered similar problems and have come up with different strategies to deal with this complicated situation. Argentine sociologist Maristella Svampa (2008) advocates for what she terms "amphibian intellectuals", who, while staying true to their politics, at the same time set high academic standards for their work, thus avoiding the trap of the "organic" intellectual, who was so close to the subject of her research that she was lacking in objectivity. On an almost opposite end of the spectrum, Jeff Juris (2008) a US based activist and anthropologist, calls for a militant ethnography explaining that Marcus' figure of the "circumstantial activist" (1995) is not enough, that the ethnographer committed to social change must be fully emotionally engaged in the struggle of those he researches with. I think both stances are correct, in that we must be emotionally engaged in the struggle we research, but must, at the same time, keep a critical, intellectual distance that allows for a clear analysis. Otherwise, researchers might fail to notice organizational failures (Scheffner 2008) as their political sympathies might cloud their best judgment.

At times, I had no option, in my view, but to "contaminate the field". I was constantly torn between my desire to further the cause of women and feminism, and my role as an observer. An example that clearly illustrates this point happened during one of the meetings of Multitudes. Multitudes, a non-hierarchical organization, was created by a group of activist from the UBA in the early nineties, when a group of young activists

created a student organization after leaving a democratically centralized political party. Just like many activists with former militancy in centralized organizations, Enrique and Paulo adopted different organizational strategies as their politics leaned towards non-hierarchical, decentralized organizing. However, although I sympathize with their organizational strategy and politics, due to the fact that gender analysis is not predominant among intellectual circles in Argentina, there were instances in which I felt compelled to abandon my passive role as an observer and take on an active role as a feminist. During my last stint of PO, in October 2009, Multitudes was discussing how to implement a three day long workshop to discuss, predominantly, how knowledge is produced collectively, always, but is later appropriated by a few who have the capacity to publish books and sign papers. They were proposing to split the discussion in panels such as work, university, and… gender. After asking them to excuse me for interfering. I explained that gender is a category that traverses all the themes they were considering, but that having a space where gender was discussed all on its own was a way to ghettoize the issue that gender constructions cross over everything we do. In this way, by addressing this problem, I brought to light a problem in the way they thought of gender, as it if were something set apart from our everyday practices. In bringing this up, I introduced an issue that they would not have introduced themselves, an action that in traditional anthropology would be construed as against the rules. However, as a feminist, I felt it was my duty to talk about it, since my interest is to further a gender analysis in social movements, so that activists can become aware of their stance on this important issue and work to change whatever oppression women are still going through in these movements.

In this case, where I had long-term friendships with many of the organizers, I was bold and presented my thoughts on the issue without restraint. However, in other spaces, such as the UAC and La Nueva Esperanza, the recovered factory, I was careful to hide my feminism to avoid placing myself in a position that might make it harder for people to want to communicate with me. In spaces like this, I would introduce myself saying that I was interested in issues of women's empowerment. Feminism has a bad reputation in Argentina, as it is construed as something invented by US and European upper-middle class women, men haters, lesbians, and other popular misconceptions. Thus, I am not the only closetted feminist in Argentina. The feminist organizers that created the Casa del Encuentro, an organization that works closely with social movements to put an end to domestic violence, prostitution, unwanted pregnancies and other issues, has the same strategy. When they start working with a social movement, they present themselves as concerned with women's issues, but leave the word feminist for later. This strategy has been productive for them, to the point that many times they are told: "But you are not feminists!" Eventually, they do talk openly about feminisms, but only once they have been able to establish a relationship of trust. K., a piquetera who participated in a focus group a the UBA (Causa and Ojam 2008), follows a similar strategy. She explains that she started talking with women in her own MTD about issues such as sexuality and maternity, that were already installed as themes in her neighborhood, but left out any reference to "the patriarchal system" (Causa and Ojam 2008). My strategy is similar, allowing me to understand, for example, why women who have non-stated feminist aims, are truly concerned with issues raised by feminists, but do not define themselves as such, as they respond to the prevalent prejudice against feminism by rejecting all feminisms.

Moreover, this strategy has helped me to communicate with many of the women who lacked a gender analysis, but once we talked about my perceptions of women's status in social movements, they start thinking along those lines. After our conversations, women who were quiet in meetings before, in many cases struggled to make themselves heard —as they are aware that they are not listened to as men are listened to (Fournier and Laudano 2002).

It was important to analyze my strategy around the issue of feminisms so that doors would not be closed on me, but it was also important to analyze the different exchanges that took place before, after, and during my fieldwork experience because my own subjectivity, positionality, race, class, education, and gender intersect in ways that affect my research and perhaps impact my conclusions. Our methodology cannot be separated from the different axes of power that impact our research. In particular, it is important to remember that feminist research is not just research about women, or even with women, but most fundamentally, it is research for women (Wolf 1996, Hesse-Biber 2004b), and consequently, for social change, since the status of women in our society is that of a non-unified, non-essential, but nevertheless for the most part oppressed group. I did not and will not publish information that could be deemed the result of intrusion (Kirsch 1999:90) or could hurt, exoticize or otherwise embarrass (Jaggar 1998) those with whom I've been working with. I am interested in telling stories of empowerment of women in the global south, that will help women empower themselves wherever they are. Just like Shahnaz Khan (2005), who worried that her research would contribute to imperialist notions regarding the condition of Islamic women, I am also careful not to tell a story that will further contribute to the stereotyping of Latin American women. I

decided to work with women whose ideology is not necessarily feminist, but who have empowered themselves, as opposed to work with women who, as in the case of Behar's Esperanza, might be more engaged in reproducing oppression than in generating alternatives.

Due to the nature of academic research in the United States today, so different from the nature of the practices of intellectuals in South America who first begun to practice PAR in the sixties and seventies, and given the fact that my training as a feminist guided my research agenda, which did not coincide with that of the different subjects of my research, I could not engage in a PAR project[lx]. However, I tried to deal with issues of representation and research agenda design in a way that was not entirely that of exercising power over, but was not entirely empowering for the workers at the factory either. Given the many imbalances in our relationship, the lack of funding on my side, and the overlapping and contradictory experiences all of us involved in the research had, I did what I could within my own and their own structural conditions and our multiplex subjectivities to overcome these imbalances, or at least acknowledge them in an honest manner.

A feminist (friendly) methodology, combined with a practice of international solidarity, can both support the struggle of the subjects of our research and help our academic careers, since communities might be more open to collaborations when they know they will benefit from the exchange, than when the academic tries to explain that their contribution will be to the field of something that in many cases the researched are not even sure what it means.

In a move that could help to minimize problematic representations of "the other", especially the "global south other", academic associations such as the Latin American Studies Association, are considering inviting civic activists to their gatherings. Students, faculty and activists who heard Neka and Soledad had access to the stories of protagonists of a struggle against neoliberal conditions of dispossession by the protagonists themselves. Our own experience at the Center for Global Justice was empowering not just for Carmen who stood up and told the story of the collective action through which the unemployed workers of El Global became the collective worker-owners of the Cooperativa La Nueva Esperanza, but for all of us academics who attended the conference. It is not often that the voice of a South American woman, a worker in factory under worker-control, resonates within the walls of a building where often times university professors address each other through formal papers attempting to understand how is it possible that people engage in collective action —something that Carmen and her co-workers did when no other venues seemed open to them. Carmen's body in that space, during the conference, conferred a different meaning to the paper I presented in our panel. With Carmen listening to what I was saying, my words had a different weight, a deeper meaning. Her body, always covered in talcum powder when in the factory in Argentina, was now resting on a chair, up on a stage in Mexico, very close to a microphone, with complete power to interrupt and deny my depiction of the cooperative and their workers, or clap and congratulate me. She was generous enough to do the second.

A few months later, back in the factory, as Carmen was helping me with the daily ritual of blowing compressed air on my hair, to get rid of most of the talcum powder from

La Nueva Esperanza, I thought that what will finally rid our discipline of the stink of anthropology's past colonial practices is not empty rhetoric about our own power as academics. Nor is it the production of embarrassing auto-ethnographic accounts of our lack of power within it given the color of our skin, or our ethnic background. What will rid us of that shame is our concrete practice in support of those who are struggling for social change in the battlefields of corporate globalization. Many anthropologists today engage in practices of advocacy or activism on behalf or alongside the subjects of their research. Some have created important NGOs, such as Nancy Scheperd-Hugues's *Organ's Watch* that combats traffic of human organs, or Paul Farmer's *Partners In Health*, that struggles for health and justice worldwide. If we honestly think we have a privilege, then, we must use that privilege to help level the field (Kruks 2005, Beauvoir 1955, Wolf 1992) by working with those who are willing to struggle to eliminate all inequalities.

Notes

xliii Lughod assigns Vincent Crapanzano (1977), Jean Paul Dumont (1986), Kevin Dwyer (1982), Paul Rabinow (1977) and Paul Riesman (1977) to this line of ethnographic research.

xliv Clifford (1986: 21) tried to explain what he considered was lack of experimental writing by women in Anthropology by alluding to the fact that it was easier to be experimental when one is tenured. Margery Wolf (1992: 50-51) agrees with this statement but thinks there is more to this. In her view, feminists have experimented with form only to be viewed as self-indulgent. Abu-Lughod raises a similar point (1990), while Ruth Behar and Deborah Gordon produced a book, Women Writing Culture, in which they offered numerous examples of women writers who had always engaged both in serious research and experimental writing. A male dominated discipline silenced many of these texts, and their authors had to encounter criticism when using, for example, poetic descriptions of their subjects, as in the case of Ruth Benedict (Behar and Gordon 1995).

xlv Hartsock justified this by explaining that Marx himself had been highly successful in explaining surplus value and alienation, even though he had reduced every social formation to two classes (proletarians and capitalists). Following on that lead, Hartsock claimed that she could focus on the commonalities of all women living in Western societies, regardless of their class and race, because "women as a sex are institutionally responsible for producing both goods and human beings" (Hartsock 1997: 468) in capitalist societies, where there is a sexual division of labor. For Hartsock "women's material life activity has important epistemological and ontological consequences for both the understanding and the construction of social relations" (1997: 474) because of women's double-journal, the repetitiveness of the house-cleaning jobs, and their connection to nature through childbearing.

xlvi In response to Haraway's critique that "subjugation is not grounds for an ontology, it might be a visual clue" (Haraway 1988b: 193), Mohanty states that although not all "marginalized locations yield crucial knowledge about power and inequality, (…) within a tightly integrated capitalist system, the particular standpoint of poor indigenous and Third World/South women provides the most inclusive viewing of systemic power (Mohanty 2003: 232)."

xlvii Margery Wolf (1992) raises the issue that although it is evident that the Western researcher holds power over the authorship of the ethnography, co-authorship with native informants might put them at risk when the ethnography addresses politically charged issues that happen under repressive regimes.

xlviii Authors that have been grouped under this label include Judith Butler, Nancy Chodorow and Luce Irigaray.

xlix This, of course, brings around the problem of what kind of politics derive from asserting an essence to the category of women, given that this essence is not real, if one is to follow anti-essentialist notions of feminism (Stone 2004). For Denise Riley (1982), however, this strategy is sound, because society operates as if women were a unified category, so claims in the name of women are effective. But as Butler (1990) and Stone herself notes, given the performativity aspects of gender, strategically deploying the category of woman can give place to reinforcing essentializing notions of women in society at large.

l Diana Wolf (1996:38) alerts us that the concept of postcoloniality does not explain the neocolonial subjectifying relations that constitute Global South subjects. I will use the term, however, for lack of a better one.

li Wolf (1992) raises the point that with all risks considered, it would be a great loss if, following some radical interpretations of postmodern analysis on ethnography, we should confine ourselves to doing ethnography of our own countries of origin. In her view, having worked in politically charged countries, many times it is only the foreign researcher who can publish hard truths that in time might help the subjects of their research through international exposure.

lii Although one could think this was a callous approach on the side of the workers, one must remember that these are people who were and are working 12 hour shifts, at times seven days a week, at times six days a week, and always under brutal conditions, as I could attest having worked alongside with them during just one single month. Moreover, researchers who research them hardly ever make their writings available to the workers. Can anybody blame them for not seeing the use of developing social theory?

liii What follows is a short list of theory and case studies of PAR. Alice McIntyre (2000), Gibson-Graham, J. K. (1994), Hemment, Julie (2007), Mary Brydon-Miller, Patricia Maguire, and Alice Mc Intyre. (2004), Park, P., M. Brydon-Miller, B. Hall, and T. Jackson (1993), Kemmis, S and M Wilkinson (1998), Whyte, W.F.(1989), and Fals-Borda, O. and M.A. Rahman (1991).

liv Elizabeth Wheatley (1994) argues that the risks highlighted by Stacey are those of not just feminist ethnography but ethnographic work in general and that the dilemma can be resolved by acknowledging the partiality of all knowledge.

lv In a private exchange, Ann Ferguson raised the objection that stories of women who are oppressed are necessary to show how structures can cause many women to accept their victim status and take power in a cooptive way. Although it is true that structural conditions can, have, and unfortunately will probably continue to lead women into becoming oppressors themselves, I think that those studies would probably serve a better purpose if conducted with women who are not in the Global South. Given that the academy in the U.S. in general is for the most part oblivious to theoretical productions originating outside of the U.S. academy (with the exception of a few European authors whose main works were published thirty years ago (Shukaitis 2007), studies that show

women as victims who victimize other women do not contribute to highlight the struggles of women in the Global South against gender and other axes of oppression.

lvi Although it stands to reason that it is important to show how structures of oppression operate through subjects and how these subjects embody that oppression and enact it themselves, my reading of Behar's work does not point in that direction. Her portrayal of Esperanza is that she reversed this process and redeemed herself through her participation in the Pancho Villa cult, which makes one wonder how turning a rapist into a deity might help women in their struggle for liberation…

lvii Elizabeth Enslin (1994) cautions that it is not enough to have the desire to help the oppressed. The ethnographer must acknowledge that most of our subjects do not speak English nor have any training in the social sciences that would allow them to capitalize on our research.

lviii Although gossip is not considered as a recognized tool for "objective" research (Leach 2000), it proved an invaluable help in my fieldwork. I did not take for truth everything I heard from Carmen and others in the factory, but it did help me situate questions in my informal and formal interviews.

lix Video and photographic evidence of their actions is important for these social movements' outreach efforts, as they allow them to show potential future members of their organizations how they go around protesting certain issues.

lx PAR, as a methodology for social change is somewhat suspect today, as PAR is used to implement development projects that are not always in the best interest of the communities where they are implemented. My somewhat nostalgic view of PAR stems from interesting activist practices in which academics and social movements still engage in Argentina today.

CHAPTER III

CONTESTING NEOLIBERAL GOVERMENTALITY

Introduction

In this chapter I will first address the deployment and development of governmentality in Argentina, focusing on the neoliberal and disciplinary governmentality (Foucault 1991, 2008) of the Kirchners' administrations (Néstor Kirchner: 2003-2007; Cristina Kirchner 2007-to present) by organizing collectively, through economic solidarity practices and egalitarian non-hierarchical, "horizontal"[lxi] power structures constituted by performances of radical, non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities. Following Ann Ferguson (2008, 2009) and Julie Matthaei (2009) I link the solidarity economy with socialist feminist aims, as the solidarity economy is based on principles that are "congruent with essential [socialist, radical, anarchist] feminist goals" (Matthaei 2009), that is, the fulfillment of human needs over profit, a rejection of hierarchies, and a community oriented development and empowerment of the individuals involved.

In order to advance these principles within their own communities, and as the social movements of my study engaged in the constructions of rhizomatic (non-hierarchical, horizontal) connections with other movements, they focused on politics of affection (Jaspers 1998; Collins 2001; Gould 2009; Goodwin et al. 2001; Berezin 2001; Barker 2001). Paying much attention to personal bonds and emotions, their movements engaged in the creation of solidarity economy projects that stood in defiance to different governmentalities that were deployed on them. Governmentality is a Foucaultian concept that describes knowledge and technologies that seek to transform subjectivities through

incentives and encouragement, primarily by governments with the support of NGOS, scientific and media discourse, and other civil society organization to "know and govern the wealth, health and happiness of populations" (Rose and Miller 1992: 272). These multiform tactics are aimed at guiding and shaping (rather than forcing) the actions of others. In Argentina, the implementation of work/welfare plans did not have just the economic aim of supporting the poor, but they were mainly geared to the creation of an active, self supported mobile subject that could shift from employment to unemployment, and then shift again to receive (meager) unemployment benefits in exchange for labor.

In the Birth of Biopower Foucault distinguishes between different kinds of governmentality, concluding that under neoliberalism governmentality is applied mainly through economic stimulus and economic punishment. Indeed neoliberalism presupposes an "economic man" that can be controlled and encouraged through economic incentives and prizes. Neoliberal governmentality, lacking for the most part in moral incentives, translated in Argentina into work/welfare plans that could be canceled if the recipient did not behave properly, that is, if the recipient continued to organize roadblocks and otherwise opposed neoliberalism. The aim was to demobilize the unemployed workers by having them labor under the direction of a state broker, a "puntero". However, the social movements of my study confronted the isolating aim of this governmentality by using the funding provided by the newly created work/welfare plans to engage in the construction of their own microenterprises, though power structures guided by the principle of power-with, the power to build community.

Following Robert Fletcher (forthcoming), I distinguish between disciplinary and neoliberal governmentality. Foucault, in his conference on governmentality (Foucault

1991), distinguishes between "sovereign power" (the power to kill, to repress) discipline and governmentality, but, as he continued to develop this concept through his classes, his initial formulation changes. In his recently edited volume, Foucault (Foucault 2008) instead formulates a theory in which he distinguished between different governmentalities, describing a neoliberal governmentality that was preceded by, and at times combined with a disciplinary governmentality. Disciplinary governmentality is associated with liberalism, as individuals are expected to internalize norms and customs that will enable them to discipline themselves. Disciplinary governmentality presupposes an individual with an inner core that can be shamed into performing certain behaviors, out of fear of social isolation. Neoliberal governmentality, on the other hand, presupposes an individual that can be manipulated and whose behavior can change by the offer of economic incentives, or by the threat of their withdrawal. This governmentality is characterized by the assumption that rational individuals will not only seek their own material benefits, but are also subject to economic manipulation. However, when this assumption was proven wrong in Argentina, and subjects continue to revolt, repression was brought down on them. Two different kinds of power —neoliberal govermentality and "sovereign power" in the form of violent repression— continued to function simultaneously. Rather than being entirely sequential, these two forms of power overlapped and were used at different moments, with distinctive groups.

These two forms of power were geared to the creation of active, self-supported mobile subjects: the entrepreneurs of the self (Rose and Miller 1992) that will adapt to market needs. However, as this adaptation did not happen in a timely manner, within the context of weakened State institutions, when welfare could not be avoided, welfare had to

look like work (Rose 1992). During the years of the economic crisis in Argentina (mid-nineties to early 2000s), consistent with neoliberal philosophy, the welfare plans that were introduced demanded work in exchange for a stipend. Expecting subjects to adapt to the new situation of structural unemployment, governmentalities were implemented through work/welfare plans that provided a small amount of money ($50.00/month) in exchange for twenty hours a week of work. Although initially, in 1996 the Menem government expected to control the recipient of these plans through the "puntero[lxii]" system and the municipalities, in 2001, under a non-Peronist government, a number of social movements obtained NGO status —a move that allowed them to access and distribute those funds among their constituency. In this way, a small number of radical social movements created a myriad of enterprises with egalitarian structures that allowed them to discuss and decode governmentality. At the same time, a number of people took over abandoned or bankrupted factories and turned them back to production (Ruggeri 2005, 2009). In this way, they unmasked the politics behind the IMF's structural adjustment austerity measures, which had not only bankrupted the country's economy, but had rendered their constituency jobless and on the verge of starvation. As these movements focused on work that would make life better for people in their own territories, their efforts were devoted to creating an economic life outside of the market by establishing non-capitalist relations of production (Gibson-Graham 1996). They opposed the ideal of the self-supported, mobile, isolated subject of neoliberalism with what Ann Ferguson named the "radical solidarity principle of justice[lxiii]" (Ferguson 2008), Marx's notion of "to each according to needs, from each according to abilities" (Marx [1875] 1986). Thus, by focusing on human beings and needs, instead of being

guided by narrow self interests, competition, individualism, and greed (Ferber 1993), their egalitarian power structures opened spaces for the creation of feminist subjects within autonomous communities engaged in fulfilling their material needs in the solidarity economy. While many working class people took over traditional factories and put them back to work, within a web of alternatives economies, impoverished middle classes and unemployed workers not only supported those take-over, but also created autonomous sources of income by collectively producing a vast array of socially necessary goods: food, clothing, shoes, household cleaners, and many other goods. While the most radical version of these movements distributed those goods among their membership, some others sold them in their neighborhoods for the most part at "solidarity" (discounted) prices. The labor involved in producing those goods was financed by the modest stipend of the welfare/work plans. The recovered factories covered their labor costs by selling their products in the market. Although their labor was financed in different ways, both the recovered factories and the PPs were organized through assembly decision making processes, presenting in this way an alternative to neoliberal dispossessing (Harvey 2005) biopower. They committed to the task of birthing an alternative power construction where a new self was born. This self was not only different from the self that was oppressed by the "punteros", but also different from the self subject to democratically centralized power structures of leftist political parties. The feminist solidarity self of the "PPs" was born out of a new engagement with the economy as well as out of the increased energies that derived from women interacting with other women, with local and international activists, academics, and artists who visited, spent time, and otherwise supported these movements.

These constructions of alternative power construction were not without challenges, conflicts, and struggles. While the recovered factories had to confront issues of competition with traditional corporations (Ruggeri 2009), the unemployed worker movements' practices were the object of attacks by the "punteros". The "punteros" are state brokers —neighborhood "big men" (and a few "big women")— who manage welfare plans, food and building materials, and in some cases even low-income housing plans. The "punteros" access these material benefits through their connections with the structures of the powerful Peronist clientelistic web, which has been active for many years but underwent important changes during the tenure of Antonio Cafiero as governor of the Province of Buenos Aires (1987-1991). The changes in the "puntero" system are explained by deep transformations in the governance of the Peronist Partido Justicialista (PJ), which had previously assigned one third of its representation to the labor unions (Delamata 2004; (Svampa and Pereyra 2003). In 1987, reforms in the party dismantled the previous structure, replacing it with general elections. Thus, leaders and candidates had to gather support and votes directly from the population in the neighborhoods. This system was consolidated once the PJ regained power in the 1990s. Through the articulation of the "punteros", votes are exchanged for material favors, which in the Province of Buenos Aires translated in millions of pesos in welfare as well as hundreds of state jobs (Delamata 2004) during Eduardo Duhalde's tenure as governor of Buenos Aires (1991-1999). Although, as Javier Auyero mentions, the "punteros" helped to maximize poor people's strategies of survival during the lead years of unemployment (Auyero 2001), at the same time this system provided the material base needed to control the social upheaval that massive unemployment, poverty, and hunger were generating. In

that way, these plans were key to consolidate neoliberal governmentality practices of creating isolated individuals incapable or unwilling to decode the politics behind the economic decisions that had rendered them unemployed. Individuals who received welfare were expected to perform certain behaviors, such as abandoning the organizations that were engaged in direct actions, simply out of a desire to continue to obtain material benefits that would otherwise be canceled.

The "puntero" system underwent important changes during Union Cívica Radical (UCR) administration, led by President Fernando de la Rua (1999-2001). The allocation of the welfare plans created by President Carlos Menem (1989-1999) underwent important transformations during De La Rua's tenure. This transformation implied that the allocation of these plans was no longer only in the hands of the local municipalities, but was placed instead also in the hands of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Thus, an important number of social movements created their own NGOs (Delamata 2004), which allowed them to access welfare plans, food, and some building materials for distribution among unemployed workers, independently from "punteros" and municipalities. In this way, although burdened with the management of welfare plans, a number of social organizations were created by different groups, which initially did not include some of the traditional leftist parties that finally created their own unemployed worker organizations in the year 2000[lxiv].

As Delamata explains, this strategy did not dismantle the "puntero" system, but rather contributed to break its monopoly over welfare funds (Delamata 2004: 27-28). Thus, although most unemployed workers who received this benefit performed their work under the supervision and direction of the mayors of their towns, or bribed a "puntero"

and did not have to work, some movements were able to collectively decide what kind of work would be performed in exchange for the welfare plans[lxv]. The aim behind the decision to decide what work would be done was multiple. On the one hand they wanted to perform work that would allow their members to live a better life, focusing on public works on their neighborhood as opposed to working in the middle class areas of their towns. On the other hand, they wanted to help their membership learn skills that would empower them into creating a solidarity market that would eventually enable them to leave the plans behind. As Marcela, in one of the Movimientos de Trabajadores Desocupados (MTD from now on) in the South of Argentina explained, the funds in exchange for work, as well as the training that was provided to develop new working skills, were sought by the radical organizations because they saw in these programs a chance to create their own collective means of subsistence, outside of the capitalist market. Their idea was that eventually they would together overcome the need for State subsidies through the creation of a web of economic solidarity.

Indigenous Definitions of Economic Solidarity

My analysis is at least partially based on indigenous meanings. Thus, I follow a definition of enterprises of the solidarity economy that was developed by radical Argentinean social movements, both in the unemployed worker sector and in the popular assembly movement. In these movements' view, enterprises of the solidarity economy can only be a true alternative to the market if they are democratic, that is when they are organized around egalitarian principles. Most importantly, they highlight that for these conditions to occur, these enterprises need to be independent from State mandates. In

order to function as spaces where new subjectivities can be developed, they must also be independent from "punteros", and, ideally, from the corporate market.

Thus, following these indigenous meanings, I distinguish between "Redes de Economía Alternativa" (from now on "Redes") (Alternative Web Economies) and the "Economía para los Pobres" (Economy for the Poor). There is an important difference between these two models. Although both appeared at the same time as a result of the implementation of welfare/work programs co-sponsored by the World Bank (Alcañiz and Scheier 2008) while the "Redes" are loosely connected economic and social enterprises based on the radical solidarity principle of justice within egalitarian social power structures partially independent from the market and the State, the "Economy for the Poor" is based on enterprises organized by mainstream NGOs and partially supported by the State. Both initiatives correspond to the second stage of neoliberalism (Molyneux 2007; Peck 2002)[lxvi]. However, while the "Redes" constitute spaces where neoliberal governmentality can be decoded and challenged, the "Economy of the Poor" is, in the view of Argentine autonomist social movements, designed to "keep the poor, poor".

This distinction between the "Economy of the Poor" and the "Redes" can be understood as a distinction between participation in a neoliberal biopower project versus participation in an alternative power construction. Under neoliberal biopower energies are harnessed in a dispossessing way. Because jobs in Europe and the US are outsourced to countries with lax labor unions, and contaminating industries are moved to the Global South, the neoliberal construction of power does not include those who do not hold the skills that the global market privileges (Ong 2006). For them, all that is left is starvation or work/welfare plans.

The recipients of these plans in Argentina had to work for the "punteros" either by cleaning wealthy areas of their neighborhoods, or by helping the "puntero" with his own chores. In this construction, not only are important decisions made without the participant's input, but also, the energies harnessed within this construction are energies that are taken away from participant's personal and family lives, as working for the "puntero" or coordinator of an NGO pumps energy out of the unemployed, but does not create a surplus of energy in the exchange. Moreover, in this construction there is no future, it is just, as participants express it: "food for today, hunger for tomorrow". On the other hand, within an alternative power construction, energies are created and harnessed by the community as a whole, discipline is part of the communities' collective decision processes, and all of life is taken into account, the affects and the production of material needs, as the community is oriented towards building personal empowerment within the organization.

The power structures of the movements within the "Redes" are not only empowering for women as they achieve important coordinating roles within these enterprises, but have also important consequences for their domestic lives. For many women, these enterprises, which have been named "Proyectos Productivos" (PPs from now on), became a space of their own, where they could produce part of their material needs at the same time that they could engage in subjectivity building processes outside of their homes. As the notion of the PPs and the "Redes" developed, women, who had been bound to their materially deprived neighborhoods by poverty so deep that made travel impossible, could now organize collectively to travel outside of their territory to meet with other organizations. Thus, the PPs became an important source of power for

women, as they opened spaces where new subjectivities could be developed (Fernandez 2006), outside of the realm of the home, autonomously from the State, "punteros" (party brokers) and up to a certain extent, constituting an alternative to the market. Within the PPs, autonomously organized men and women could challenge governmentality's aim of isolation, demobilization and creation of subjects capable of adapting to the shifting conditions of a market based on inequalities and exclusions.

Background

What were the specific material and discursive conditions that allowed for the creation of these spaces? Although many scholars agree that the IMF's structural adjustment's harsh economic measures lie at the base of the massive protests that raked Argentina from mid nineties to 2002 (Auyero 2003; Tenti 2000; Entel 1996; Pereyra 2008; Farinetti 1998; Scribano 1999; Inigo Carrera 1999; Klachko 1999), Argentina is only one of many countries in the global south that underwent IMF shock therapy. However, although many movements have protested with more or less success these policies elsewhere, the Argentine case shows a complex array of socially organized responses to the crisis generated by these policies.

The responses of the population to the economic and social crisis included not only the much publicized road blockades, where thousands of protestors took over highways, sometimes during several days, but most importantly the creation of hundreds of PPs through which the unemployed workers took life and its production in their own hands. These enterprises were named PPs as opposed to microenterprises for two reasons: "microenterprise" indexes, locally to a different organizational structure than the one of the PPs. In their view, a microenterprise is an activity where "un 'tipo' (a guy)

tells the rest what to do". The PP on the contrary, are "managed by all and belong to all of us"(my interviews with MTD woman, 2003). Furthermore, the microenterprises are envisioned as spaces that will facilitate reinsertion in the capitalist market, which the radical MTDs were not interested in. In their view, the PPs were an essential component in their quest for autonomy and personal connections beyond the individualistic logic of capitalism (Bidaseca 2006).

These self-managed workshops were financed through the welfare plans that the unemployed worker movement wrestled from the national government, but, contrary to state expectations, the labor demandeded by the welfare plans were used by these groups according to their own needs. While most unemployed workers received their subsidy through a "puntero", a person usually associated with the Peronist party (in power) and had to either bribe the "puntero" to avoid work (Bidaseca 2006, my own interviews), or work as the "puntero" demanded, radical social movements self-organized to comply with the labor demand, employing that time to generate not only a much needed income for the organization, but also building skills and social capital with the objective of, at some point, become truly autonomous from the state by supporting themselves exclusively through their PPs, leaving the welfare plans behind (Bidaseca 2006). As Yolanda, a woman in one of the MTDs' PP, a bakery explained, "I don't like the 'Planes' (welfare plans). I live off them right now, but I don't like them. I don't like to depend on the government, I think of the 'Planes' as a way to organize something better, like this PP." (Interview by Colectivo Nómade).

Although a majority of people could not break free of state bonds deployed through the "punteros", at the same time that radical unemployed worker organizations

self-organized through the PPs, an important number of people took over abandoned and bankrupted factories and put them back to work. Through this process, over 10,000 people (Ruggeri 2005b) re-created their own means of subsistence, avoiding unemployment at the same time that they engaged in a collective process through which they avoided the loss of self-esteem and guilt that unemployment generated in many (Flores 2002), creating at the same time over 160 egalitarian workplaces, most of which that are still producing (Ruggeri 2009)[lxvii].

While sectors of the unemployed working class created their own PPs and took over factories, sectors of the middle class not only supported these initiatives, but also came up with their own PPs, as part of their organizational strategies in the popular assembly movement. It is thus important to consider what is it about Argentina that made these responses possible, and how these responses constitute a challenge to the governmentality aim of isolating individuals to avoid the massive rebellions spawned by the structural adjustment policies during mid nineties to early 2000s.

The First Peronist Governmentality

Argentina is a country where folks who work for a living, especially the working and lower-middle classes, identify themselves as workers, and have a long history of organizing. The working class of this country had an early affair with anarchism and socialism at the end of the 1800s and early 1900s, but it was Juan Domingo Perón, a military officer, who was able to seduce them into a long term, albeit rocky relationship. Perón became President of Argentina in 1946 following the mobilization of masses of workers in his support while serving as Vice-President, Minister of War and Minister of Labor in 1945. His project was the creation of a national industry that would grant

Argentina entrance to the realm of the industrialized nations, establishing a "third position" meant to be both ideologically and economically independent from the Western industrialized nations and from the Soviet Union. With Peronism, the Argentine workers made their grand entrance into the political reality of the country.

While the previous incarnations of power could be construed as having power over life and death, Peronism inaugurated a new disciplinary governmentality. Modern government involves more than control and disciplining of the population, it involves the creation of free citizens that self-discipline as they accept government's regulations and incentives, geared towards ensuring the wellbeing of the market. Women were able to vote for the first time, the poor received generous welfare benefits, and, as the unions were incorporated into the government, new laws were implemented to protect labor. With the inauguration of the welfare state, clientelism became a major political tool to create and control social subjects (Auyero 2001). A new social subject was made: the worker. This worker was created through the material incentives mentioned above, but the development of this new subject was also ensured by the application of disciplinary governmentality designed to keep this worker within the Peronist movement. The good Argentine worker was somebody who was not involved in politics (except for being a Peronist), causing no troubles to the government, employing his time in going from home to work, and from work to home.

Peronism defined the culture of the working class in those years — anticommunist, anti-imperialist, nationalist and hierarchically organized under the leadership of Perón. His overthrow in 1955 and the subsequent banishment of the Peronist party from the elections set up the scene for decades of popular resistance.

During the 1960s and early 1970s many young people envisioned Peronism as a shortcut to socialism and organized within the party structures to achieve that end. The Argentine left, both within and without the Peronist structure, fought over the body, the political thought and the capacity of mobilization of this worker for many decades.

Neoliberalism, Unemployment, and Poverty

Néstor Kirchner, a leftist Peronist in the 1970s, accessed power in 2003, in what could be defined as a monstrous outcome of the December 2001 insurrection. The mass mobilizations of those days constituted on the one hand a rejection of neoliberalism, and on the other a rejection of political representation, as exemplified by the chant "Que se Vayan Todos!" (Throw them all out —politicians, the IMF, the corrupt Supreme Court judges). Kirchner embodied the rejection to the IMF and the corrupt Court, but was elected as a "representative" —as one of those to whom the "Que se vayan todos!" eas chanted to, one that the streets had ordered to leave. On December 19-20 2001, thousands of people throughout Argentina seemingly spontaneously assembled on the streets to protest the result of decades of neoliberal politics. Although they were not able to create long standing powerful decentralized popular structures[lxviii], the rebellion signaled and raised awareness to the role of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) structural adjustment policies in the economic and social crisis. In 1975, only 10 percent of Argentina's population was below the poverty line. In 2002 it was 61.3 percent and unemployment was at 26 percent. These statistics were clear markers of the depth of the crisis, but the political manifestations of those months following the uprising created consciousness about the deep causes of the social disaster. The economic model of the fifties, based on the manufacturing industry and agriculture, was replaced by a model

dominated by financial capital, based on services, international speculation, capital flight, and deep dependence on foreign loans (Arisó 2002). Argentina, a wealthy country by South American standards in the 1970s, fell prey to this economic and cultural model, characterized by David Harvey as accumulation by dispossession (Harvey 2005), becoming a poor, deeply dependent nation with all-time historically high levels of unemployment.

The global move towards a preeminence of the service industry over the manufacturing industry, and the subsequent shrinking in labor needs meant that it was no longer necessary for the whole population of Argentina to be employed. So what we see is —more than a failed biopower— a reduction on labor needs, which left masses of unemployed people out of the production and consumption processes. The state, shrinking under the pressure of structural adjustment policies, abandoned its role of harnessing the energy of the population as a whole, and only took care of those that appeared to be needed, thus stripping the rest of even the most minimal conditions necessary to survive. Marcela, a woman who lost her job in her forties, knows well what this means. "Without a job, you are nobody. You feel useless. I supported myself since I was a very young woman, but since I lost my job I've been feeling like an outsider to everything ("por fuera de todo") (my interview, 2009). Under neoliberalism, citizens who bear the skills that capital demands are privileged, while others become non-citizens and are left out of the markets (Ong 2006)[lxix].

Resistance to Neoliberalism

All through the 1990s, under the Carlos Menem presidencies, the unemployed workers developed strategies to call attention to their plight. Massive road blockades and

direct actions where the police and the National Guard killed unemployed workers spawned a non-hierarchical, horizontally led movement. In 1999, Fernando De La Rua, following Menem's presidency, was elected on a platform that promised to change the economic situation. However, his administration followed exactly the same pattern because the IMF continued to control the economic model. In December 2001 his government was brought down amidst mass mobilizations and direct actions against banks in response to the confiscation of the middle classes savings. This was preceded by lootings around Buenos Aires and other cities, and the declaration of the state of siege. De La Rua will be remembered for ordering the execution of several people during the revolt, close to the government house, some of them of middle class origin, as most of the participants of the 2001 revolt had that origin. Indeed, although confined, at the beginning, to unemployed workers, towards the end of 2001, this horizontally organized movement had reached the middle classes. Fueled by a rejection to the State, political parties, and goernments, both the unemployed workers and the middle class popular assembly members used direct democracy as their organizing strategy, and chose to not elect representatives or otherwise empower a few over the many. Instead, they participated regularly in meetings with lists of speakers that proposed actions and, in some cases, political analysis. After three short-lived Congressionally appointed presidencies, Eduardo Duhalde, elected in 2002, had to call for elections after the Massacre of the Pueyrredón Bridge (the Massacre from now on) in Buenos Aires, where hundreds of unemployed workers were injured and two were murdered by the police.

This repression was directed at the Coordinadora Aníbal Verón, an autonomous front of MTDs that enjoyed massive support of the middle class popular assembly

movement. Ample sectors of the middle class, which had shown support for the unemployed workers during the months that preceded the 2001 insurrection were scared by the violence displayed. At the same time they were manipulated by the government into believing the unemployed were violent themselves. As the middle classes withdrew their support of the unemployed, the Massacre signaled the end of an interesting process that opened in the 1990s with "puebladas[lxx]" and massive road blockades in the interior of the country. While the 1970s seemed to be characterized by the unrelenting pursue of the one subject of social change (the industrial proletariat) and the ability of the political parties to represent it, the decades that followed the dictatorship and brought on the new social landscape of the structural adjustment —plagued by poverty, exclusion, unemployment and hunger, seem characterized by the necessity to establish webs of resistance that did not squash the difference, but rather worked to support it.

While traditional leftist politics advocated for the middle classes to submit to the political program of action of the proletariat, the new social movements have developed political strategies that de facto tend to address changes exhibited in the mode of production. Given that in the developed countries the industry is no longer the most important sector of the economy, having been displaced by services and financial capital, authors reflect on the immaterialization of labor and the proletarianization of the whole of society (Hardt and Negri 2000). In South America, though, the changes in the mode of production are not connected with off-sourcing of manufacturing and other industries as in the Global North. In Latin America, this change was provoked by the structural adjustment policies. Through this process, Argentina became, once again, a provider of cheap nature. The opening of the country's borders to unrestricted imports, while

downsizing and selling the nationally owned enterprises, created high levels of unemployment and poverty that effectively destroyed important sectors of the middle class, proletarianizing (forcing into the proletariat) in this way an important part of this class. Moreover, as many workers refused to become unemployed, factories were taken over and put back into production. Thus, a sector of the working class became collective owners of the means of production, placing themselves outside of the proletariat, since by definition these cannot own the means of production, but also outside of the class that traditionally owns the means of production. Because, for the most part, the recovered factories only "exploit" their own labor, a new social subject was created, one that like the unemployed workers of the PPs, engaged in practices of solidarity economy.

These diversity of new social actors and the changes in the mode of production, explain the appearance of a multi-class movement of movements, where even those who had been traditionally characterized as lumpen proletariat, and by this same definition impossible to organize according to Marxian orthodoxy (the unemployed workers), embodied one of the most creative and ambitious social movements of the twenty-first century. The popular assemblies, composed mainly of middle class neighbors of big Argentine cities can also testify to this new vision of power and social organization. In traditional Marxist theory, these neighbors should have organized themselves under the dictates of the proletariat organized in *the* party. In spite of this theoretical dilemma, the popular assemblies became a force by themselves, with their own agenda and a somewhat diffuse political aim. At the same time, the movement of the recovered factories performed expropriations of the means of production, but instead of organizing themselves into a traditional party, they preferred the uncertain freedoms allowed by

loose and unstable networks[lxxi]. Along with the popular assemblies and unemployed worker organizations, they constituted a multiplicity of structures —that respected their differences by resisting delegation, hierarchies and fixed leaderships (Fernandez 2006). The webs of resistance, thus, became like multiple folds in a structure that maintained the independence of those folds, but made the web stronger as folding a piece of cloth over and over again will make this cloth stronger than a single layered fabric[lxxii].

The Constitution of Politics by Other Means

The reasons behind the distrust of government, leftist (hierarchical) political structures and leaders, in Argentina, obey a number of global and local reasons, ranging from citizen's experiences with state terror during the 1976-1983 dictatorship, to the fall of the Soviet Union, to the years of the structural adjustment when the national government was seen as a manager for the IMF, to activists' negative experiences with leftist political parties and unions. These negative experiences with hierarchical structures explain social movements engagement with non-hierarchical politics.

The experience of losing 30,000 activists in the seventies is deeply engrained in the collective memory of those who struggle, under different banners, for social change. Many activists in these movements are aware that leaders can and have been killed. As one of the members of the MTD Aníbal Verón[lxxiii] explained to me in 2002, shortly after Darío Santillán was killed in the Massacre: "If you have a leader, and he is killed, you do not know what to do afterwards. Darío was killed, and it was a blow for us on more than one level, but our organization has not been impacted in a major way and we continue doing what we were doing before". In a country where repression is always around the corner, continuity of the organizations beyond their leaders is a major concern[lxxiv].

Although the MTD Aníbal Verón was constituted for the most part by very young activists at the time, for the older activists connected with the autonomist movements, there were other reasons that also explained their interest in creating non-hierarchical structures. An important number of prominent activists had been active in guerrilla organizations in the seventies, like author Luis Mattini, or MTD Allen "referente", "El Vazco" Irurzún. Others had been part of Trotskyist organizations, like "Toti" Flores, (today a national representative through the center-right Coalición Cívica, but previously the founder of the autonomist MTD La Matanza), or Luis Zamora, ex-MAS, founder of "Autodeterminación y Libertad", a political party that functions with a similar structure to that of the popular assemblies. Some of these "referentes" had been active in movements organized as political parties, as the Movimiento Todos por la Patria (MTP), where Alberto Spagnoulo, an important organizer with MTD Solano, was part of their national board[lxxv]. For these and other older activists, the negative experience of being part of hierarchical organizations went beyond the loss of leaders, although those losses were important to them. According to the many conversations I have had throughout the years with both ex-Trotskyist and ex-guerrilla commanders, what these men and women experienced in the hierarchical organizations they belonged to was traumatic since the leadership disallowed criticism, set their political agenda disregarding anybody outside their central committees, and proceeded to summary expulsions of those activists who were not willing to comply. In short, there was no room there either for establishing links with the rest of the population, or for personal political ideas that did not go well with the central committee. Targeting hierarchy as the root of the problem, and with an eye in the

fall of the Soviet Union and their hyper-centralized state, they moved on to envision new ways of organizing.

Landscapes of Power-over

Although for the most part women were not in leadership positions during the years previous to the 1976-1983 dictatorship, those who were part of these organizations, like myself, suffered under the disciplinarian terror imposed by the upper-echelons cadres, as dissent was not tolerated and activists were forced, if necessary, to engage in activities that might not have been of their choice. The democratically centralized party, as it is oriented to take over the state, is an institution that does not accommodate radical, non-hegemonizing feminine and masculine performances of power, as male dominated meetings often escalate to verbal (and sometimes even physical) terrorism wielded by the leaders to ensure that the militant will adhere blindly to party directives. As the aim of the party (overthrow of the bourgeois state) is constructed as superior to any personal objective, or desire of the militant, the militants are expected to repress any personal needs, desires, or dreams, to follow strictly the party's orders. Thus, if the militant does not comply, violence will be "justifiably" exerted on him or her. The logic of the Leninist party is that of the destruction of the state, and thus, requires an exterminating machine, whose logic and disciplinarian aim can be traced all the way to the army (Foucault 1979). As the army and war have been strongly linked with hegemonic masculinities (Connell 2000; Higate and Hopton 2005), it is not surprising to find that this particular type of masculinity dominates democratically centralized parties as their organization resembles an army in its centralization, although it differs from in that leaders, at least in theory, are elected in congresses of all membership. However, even if

the congress were to be held once a year, as Leninist tradition demands (Lenin 1929), because the parties are male dominated and thus their democratic procedures tainted, women and men who perform political femininities have little chance to access leadership roles. In order to sustain male dominance within the party, not only discipline is enforced on the individual, squashing her potential dissent, but also there are great displays of "machismo", homophobia, and sexism.

Having been told, in so many words, that my problem was my middle class origin (although my mother was a maid, my father did own a small metal workshop), I was eager to prove that I was as revolutionary and as disciplined as anybody else. Thus, for many years I followed directives from middle age men, who had no connection with the working class, and spent most of their time writing in their offices. Although the party had not held a congress in many years, I still believed that the Central Committee (CC) embodied the class conscience of the proletarian —*their* middle class origin notwithstanding. Two years after joining, in 1986, my devotion earned me not only responsibilities within the youth of the party, but also a part-time clerical job as assistant to the members of the CC, who were in charge of publishing the paper. I was impressed by what I thought at the time to be sophisticated political theories, but the impression did not last long. Soon, I realized that the main leader, Jorge Altamira, controlled the rest of the CC and all of the staff through verbal terrorism. The party had little money, and computers were expensive items, so Altamira and other members of the "Comité de Redacción" (Editing Committee of the weekly newspaper) handwrote their articles and handed them to an older man, survivor of the dictatorship, "El Viejo" (the Old Man). Altamira's handwriting was almost impossible to decode, so at times, typos would find

their way into the published newspaper. Once, when a typo changed the sense of an important title in the published edition, Altamira stormed down from his office into our cubicle, and red in the face, started yelling to El Viejo: "Viejo, you son of a bitch, you are trying to destroy the party, Viejo. You are a counterrevolutionary and you are trying to destroy all of us, you motherfucker". Sitting by "El Viejo", who could manage only to stutter some apologies, I was terrified, as Altamira, a big man in his fifties at the time, seemed to be out of control. Eventually, and after kicking a few objects around, he left the cubicle. As I soon found out, humiliating "El Viejo" was one of his favorite ways to let steam off, but not the only one. Several members of the party underwent similar violent situations on regular basis. The explanation was, inevitably: "Jorge es así", Jorge is like that. Altamira, and the members of the Central Committee (all of them men with the exception of a nominal woman who was hardly ever present) were, really, the only subjects in the organization. The rest of us were mere objects of their decisions and disciplinary measures.

Although oppressive for everybody, the discourse of the party toward women and gay men was disheartening. In order to sustain discipline and at the same time blend with the rest of the population, the leadership had to perform leftist macho hegemonic masculinity —most prominently sexism and homophobia. Examples abound, and include a conversation with Altamira's brother, Cacho Magri explaining to me that his mother used to refer to my college, Filosofía y Letras (Filo) in the Universidad de Buenos Aires (UBA), as the brothel, since both himself and his brother, Jorge, used to take classes there in order to "get laid" by female students with liberal attitudes toward sex. Although this comment struck home, since I was one of the female students with liberal attitudes

toward sex at that school, it was common to hear members of the CC share stories that put down women whose bodies did not conform to the mainstream ideal of beauty which mandated culturally and historically specific desirable proportions (Urla1995). For example, Cacho used to narrate what happened when he visited Paris for a meeting with Ernest Mandel's Fourth International. Magri was housed in Paris by a French compañera, who according to Cacho, was probably "the only ugly French woman in Paris". As he went to sleep that night, he carefully placed his shoe by his side, in case the compañera became confused during the night and tried to have sex with him. The shoe, this member of the CC explained, would help him defend himself from the potential sexual advances of the "ugly" compañera.

However, although distressful as they show men who struggle for power without ever questioning their gender privileges, these anecdotes paled when compared to what was said about gay men. My defense of sexual freedom was normally encountered with "You say so because you don't have a male child"[lxxvi]. Narrowly focusing on economic issues concerning the working class, the party could not allow for what was considered capitalist, petit bourgeois deviations. The party's pursuit of a revolutionary change that excluded a deep transformation of social practices of exclusion led Néstor Perlongher, anthropologist, poet, and, later prominent gay activist, to leave the organization[lxxvii] accusing the leadership of homophobia, as he refused to hide his sexual preferences from public view, as the party demanded[lxxviii]. Similarly, women who were active in the Argentine Communist Party expressed when interviewed that the party had strong patriarchal morals, privileging nuclear families and discouraging homosexuality and extra-marital relations. Although these women did not describe the use of physical

violence to impose this moral agenda, I did observe similar situations in other centralized political parties, such as the Movimiento Al Socialismo (MAS). In the early nineties, the youth of the MAS split. As I was an activist in another Trotskyist organization, I was able to talk with both sides, and observe how this split evolved. The two most important youth organizers were openly gay, which led many activists within the MAS to violently denounce their homosexuality. The public denunciation of their gayness was an effective way to attack them, as the party characterized this as lack of revolutionary morals, which helped the MAS explain why they had left the party, a revolutionary organization. This moral attack opened the way for a series of physical attacks that landed more than one activist in the hospital with broken bones. Examples of violent leftist macho hegemonic masculinity in centralized parties abound, and explain, partially, the reason for many activists abandoning not only these organizations, but most importantly, refusing to engage in oppressive, centralized power constructions.

Politics by Other Means: Zapatismo, Unemployed Urban Workers, and Popular Assemblies

Issues of oppression within democratically centralized parties, for both men and women, as well as the fall of the Soviet Union, account for the collective sense of disillusion with hierarchical organizations that spread among activists. This disillusion with leftist organizations led to the appearance of Autonomists movements. Autonomism is a set of theories and group practices strongly influenced by Marxism, Situationism, Poststructural and Postmodern philosophies, that have been founded on, and have contributed to the rise of social movements in different parts of the world, including most prominently Mexico and Argentina. Autonomist movements are not aimed at state power, but rather engage in non-capitalist social practices more or less independent from

the market, the State, trade unions and conventional political parties. These initiatives and practices build communities, which are not only independent from the market but also explicitly stress the importance of participants' affects and personal connections.

Autonomist theorists, such as Mario Tronti (1971), Michael Hardt and Toni Negri (Hardt 2000), Paolo Virno (1996), Félix Guattari (2009), John Holloway (2002), Harry Cleaver (2000) and Cornelius Castoriadis ([1960] 1974), point to the capacity of the population to produce social change within capitalism, but outside of its organizing logic. These theorists argue that capital depends on labor writ-large as students, housewives, gay and lesbian activists, and workers in general, have the potential, without taking State power, to produce an exodus from capitalism by organizing egalitarian communities of their own design —autonomously from the State and capitalism.

Both the indigenous uprising in the southeastern hills of Chiapas and the multiplicity of autonomist organizations in Argentina constitute examples of organizing practices largely independent from the national State and political parties. On January 1st 1994, the same day that the North American Trade Agreement (NAFTA) came into effect, the neglected, forgotten, excluded, indigenous of Chiapas made themselves heard. Following ten years of training undercover, the Zapatistas took over several cities in Southern Mexico as they liberated an important part of Chiapas, one of Mexico's biggest states. Their movement was born as a response to indigenous people's frustration with traditional organizations that were not able to produce social change in the face of the economic crisis and political corruption that racked the country (Swords 2008).

The strength of the Zapatistas' postmodern revolution does not lie in their capacity for armed struggle —largely inexistent after the initial weeks of the uprising and

State repression of their communities. It lies, instead, in their prefigurative political and economic organizations as their power structures reflect the egalitarian societies they would like to create. The Zapatistas, who control forty percent of the state of Chiapas, organize through the Juntas de Buen Gobierno —egalitarian-governing bodies constituted by "campesinos" and "campesinas" who rotate weekly, thus avoiding the issues of representation and bureaucratization that plagued the hierarchical social organizations that preceded them. Their numerous enterprises, such as organic coffee coops, cooperative stores, corn mills, garment coops, and other productive initiatives allow them to remain autonomous from the Mexican state.

Like the Zapatistas, Autonomists movements in Argentina bloomed in the ragged interstices of capitalism. In 2001 the Argentine economy collapsed after decades of neoliberal structural adjustment. Faced with a state whose functions did not include assisting the masses of people suffering from high levels of unemployment, poverty, and hunger, those who had been excluded from markets and official discourse found a space to struggle, build community, and survive the implementation of the IMF's structural adjustment plans. While Zapatismo in Mexico is for the most part embodied in the indigenous population of the state of Chiapas, Autonomism in Argentina surfaced in urban organizations of unemployed workers, in worker's take-over of almost two hundred bankrupted industries, and in numerous multiclass popular assemblies that struggle against the extraction of natural resources by multinational corporations. Examples of continuity with the popular assembly movement include the Union de Asambleas Ciudadanas Regional Buenos Aires (UAC)[lxxix] which coordinates over 60 groups throughout the country, and the Marcha de Antorchas[lxxx] in Santa Fe, that

organizes for justice for the thousands of people who in 2003 lost their livelihoods, homes, and family members in a neoliberal, Katrina style flood that could have been avoided by the local government.

Although the experience of armed struggle was not something most survivors of the seventies would attempt to repeat, the Zapatista ideal of ruling by obeying, discussing issues in assemblies of all members, and popular education for all (as opposed to cadre schools) became prevalent and illustrated the way popular assemblies and Autonomist unemployed workers organization operated. As we will see, this type of non-hierarchical organization was important in the struggle against individualistic, isolating governmentality practices, especially as it extended to practices of economic solidarity aimed at creating egalitarian spaces for the production of material needs, outside of the logic of the market.

The neoliberal Peronist governmentality

As state repression of unemployed workers failed to contain the road blockades that all but paralyzed services and the distribution of goods between corporations throughout the country (Nowhere 2003), neoliberal practices moved from the market fundamentalism that characterized the first decades of implementation of the structural adjustment plans (1989-mid-nineties) to neoliberalism with a "human face" (Cornia 1987; Laurie 2002), or rather, a "human mask[lxxxi]" as welfare plans were implemented in 1997 by President Duhalde's administration. Although Duhalde initiated these plans, he continued to repress "piquetes" on the highways. On June 26, 2002, Duhalde allegedly ordered the repression of the Coordinadora Aníbal Verón. While hundreds of "piqueteros" and "piqueteras" were injured, arrested and tortured by the police, two

young men, Darío Santillán and Maxi Kosteki, were killed by police bullets. As popular mobilization rested the responsibility at Duhalde's doorstep, he had to call for elections. In 2003, former president Carlos Menem won the election by a small margin, over Néstor Kirchner, Duhalde's candidate. Menem, conscious that he would lose on a second round, resigned. Thus, Néstor Kirchner, the unknown Governor of the southern province of Santa Cruz, Duhalde's candidate at the time and his enemy today, became president of Argentina.

The intellectual/activist group Colectivo Situaciones (Situaciones 2006) theorized on the changes in Argentina's politics to conclude that a new governmentality began under Néstor Kirchner's presidency. In Barbara Cruikshank's words, the Foucaultian concept of governmentality alludes to those "forms of action and relations of power that aim to guide and shape (rather than force, control, or dominate) the actions of others" (Cruikshank 1999, 4). The result of this "conduct of conduct" is mainly the creation of new subject citizens by means of governmental technologies, such as welfare and other programs, that is, discursive and material practices that operate on the free will of subjects by privileging and reinforcing certain public behaviors, mainly through incentives, but not totally exempt of coercion, with the aim of ensuring that the subject will accept governmental discipline as they learn how to discipline themselves[lxxxii]. In the Birth of Biopower (2008), Foucault distinguishes between disciplinary governmentality (mainly directed to create values and norms of behavior that the subject internalizes) and neoliberal governmentality, which aims at creating and avoiding certain behaviors through the offer of incentives and the threat to cancel them. I believe the Kirchner administration applied mostly neoliberal governmentality on the unemployed workers,

supported by a disciplinary governmentality geared toward the middle classes. With the assistance of the media, the administration produced a discourse that built on longstanding racist tenets of the Argentine middle classes toward the working class. Unemployed workers were portrayed as lazy people who were avoiding work. At the same time, the administration implemented neoliberal governmentality by extending benefits and subsidies to unemployed workers who responded to the administration, while attempting to cut off unemployed workers who continued to organize roadblockades once the economic situation improved in 2003[lxxxiii]. In this way, most social movements were disciplined, through a two pronged governmental action: on the one side the creation of subsidies that required work from the unemployed, while all along the unemployed who were receiving this benefit were shown as people who just did not want to work.

Kirchner operated a profound transformation of the existing modes of subjectification, especially among unemployed workers, by perfecting the programs established by his predecessor, as he evaluated correctly that popular support for unemployed workers had all but disappeared. Previously, during Eduardo Duhalde's short term Congress appointed presidency, food and welfare plans were distributed to unemployed worker organizations that agreed to free the highways they were blockading (Svampa 2004:1). Once they accepted the plans, they began losing credibility among the middle classes, who began to think of them as opportunistic and not willing to work (Villalón 2008). Kirchner took full advantage of the changes in the way the middle classes perceived the unemployed workers. Their organizations could not articulate a political front to offer alternatives to the dominant hegemonic model, nor could they stop

blockading roads (Svampa 2007). While the middle classes were mobilized and engaged in direct actions against the banks, there was widespread support for the unemployed workers' road blockades. However, as the economic situation stabilized, popular support for the movement waned, as they continued to engage in road blockades that turned the whole country into chaos. The unemployed organizations could not adjust their repertoire of tactics, nor did they come up with a political, viable alternative. On the contrary, the many "piquetero" organizations split into smaller movements, and important sectors responded to Kirchner's call with several prominent "piquetero" organizers joining the government. At the same time Kirchner, through the State, coopted many micro-enterprises created by the movements by offering much needed capital for machinery, which came hand in hand with state regulations concerning "ownership" of the micro enterprises. The workshops, bakeries, organic gardens, and other initiatives of the organizations were financially supported by the Kirchner administration, but there were also requirements to turn those micro enterprises from collectively owned into something different, since the financial support was assigned to a single "owner" and not to the organization as a body. This, in turn, created issues of individual appropriation of what had been so far a collective effort with surpluses distributed equally among producers. It constitutes a clear example of a conflict between the collective struggle of the unemployed to break free from clientelism by creating their own social-economic institutions, and the efforts of the government to create individualistic, capitalist, self-supported neoliberal subjects.

Introducing the logic of individual appropriation into the PPs contributed to their balkanization not only because individual ownership collided with organizations built

around principles of radical solidarity, but also because the conflicts that arose around the issue reinforced the performances of leftist macho hegemonic masculinity that the "referentes" were trying to avoid, so as to not repeat the oppressive situation of the democratically centralized parties. Indeed, the struggle over the control of the PPs' machinery and resources stressed out the relations of participants, giving place to ugly intra-movement violence, which inevitably led to angry splits.

The devastating effect of neoliberal governmentality over these social movements should be analyzed from a perspective that distinguishes mere State repression from the creation of subjects that can endure governmental discipline. Foucault (1991) proposes that we look into the relationship between security, population and government to identify the workings of power in society. If the 1990s had more emphasis on the security (repression) aspect of this trilogy, there is a definite change in Argentina under the Kirchner administration. The 1990s were characterized by neoliberal adjustments, high unemployment, rapidly growing poverty, and brutal repression in the streets against social protest. Due to the structural adjustment, and the global shrinking of the manufacturing industry, the neoliberal state, bent on maximizing economic growth, rather than guaranteeing life, could only enact a limited version of its biopower function of regulating and creating life, creating instead death and destruction. As a response, these social movements took the issues of health, prosperity, habitat, land, and reproduction into their own hands, outside of state influence. Thus, unemployed worker movements created an important array of micro-enterprises that produced food, clothing, and other basic needs for their own constituents (Svampa and Pereyra 2003). Most importantly, those movements that due to a critique of hierarchy that many in their membership were

able to develop, organized non-hierarchically, confronted neoliberal governmentality in its isolating aim by collectively decoding the different governmental techniques deployed on them. However, and because the logic of leftist macho hegemonic masculinity political performances is similar to that of the state (oriented toward war, aggressive, violent, competitive, and hierarchical), those movements that could not open spaces for performances of radical non-hegemonizing femininities and masculinities created power structures that, resembling that of the state, could not oppose its practices and techniques. Moreover, when these groups came together to struggle for a place in society, unemployment was high. As the economy became stronger, and unemployment went down, the micro-enterprises felt the strain, as many unemployed workers were able to find jobs, which even if low paying and precarious, still translated into a more secure income. As mentioned above, performance of leftist macho hegemonic masculinity by the older "referentes", contributed, as well, to bring down many unemployed workers' organizations.

President Kirchner's policies of milder repression of protestors, social control through welfare for those that support the government, and better living conditions for the middle classes shows an adjustment of government policies of old modes of subjectification, which resulted in a new kind of Peronist clientelism. Maristella Svampa (2006), an Argentine sociologist, depicted the Kirchner administration as a force for negotiation, disciplining and repression of the unemployed workers. Indeed, Kirchner's disciplining of social movements worked wonders in the outskirts of Buenos Aires, in what used to be "the industrial belt" but has been home to high unemployment rates since the nineties. An important sector of the piquetero (unemployed workers) movement

supports the government and are happy to receive much more financial support than other unemployed organizations. As for the middle classes, their income has increased since the years of the economic crisis, and they have seen positive changes in human rights policies, at the same time that they accepted disciplinary governmentality, breaking their alliance with the unemployed workers, whom the government portrayed as lazy and violent.

The middle classes were also seduced, at least initially, by Kirchner's human right policies, as an important number of military officers involved in the disappearances of the late 1970s and early 1980s were brought to trial, judged guilty and sent to jail. However, these trials did not dismantle the repressive apparatus of Argentina, as exemplified by the disappearance in 2006 of Julio López, a 76-year-old key witness against Miguel Etchecolatz, a police officer now convicted for genocide committed during the dictatorship. In addition, these trials have no effect on the behavior of the police in the poor neighborhoods of Argentina, where, under the Kirchner administration, in only one year, 2005, the police killed 183 people in what human rights organizations considered were cases of trigger-happy police[lxxxiv].

Néstor Kirchner decided not to run for a second term, and had his wife, Cristina Kirchner run instead. She was elected in October 2007 with 47 percent of the vote. Her administration, so far, has built on Néstor Kirchner's model of "export-extraction" of natural resources (Svampa 2007). These resources, which include crops, water, trees, and underground mineral resources are overexploited by local and multinational corporations, to be sold in the global market, at great profit for the corporations. At the same time, Cristina Kirchner continued to enact a mixture of an attenuated version of neoliberal

economics with traditional Peronism: heavy taxing on agricultural exports[lxxxv], cooptation of social initiatives by the government and repression of those who fall out of this deal. Non-Peronist unemployed and unionized workers in different cities of Argentina have suffered serious persecution, repression, incarceration and even torture. In 2006, for example, in Las Heras, Santa Cruz, the Kirchner's home state, unionized workers in the oil industry were on strike when one of their leaders was imprisoned. The workers and some community members took over the police station. In the confusion that ensued, a policeman was shot dead. The workers denied responsibility over this action, but Kirchner sent the National Guard and militarized Las Heras. Although in this neoliberal Peronist governmentality the emphasis is not on repression, that is not to say that physical repression is no longer part of the repertoire of governmental practices, only that it is not the main tool, as in previous administrations, but still a powerful one that reinforces the message of cooperation: to prosper economically it is necessary to perform behaviors that are encouraged by the government.

Constitution of Subjects and Agency

Although David Harvey (2005) focuses on the deadly freedoms of neoliberalism (free markets, free trade, free property rights), Foucault, on the contrary, envisions the neoliberal state as operating deeply into society, to create subjects whose energies can be harnessed through disciplinary and neoliberal governmentality (Fletcher, forthcoming). Neoliberal (and disciplinary) governmentality can only be exercised over free subjects. Foucault's emphasis on power being exercised "over free subjects, and only insofar as they are 'free'" (Foucault 2003:139) opens the theoretical space needed to understand the agency and the counter hegemonic practices of the population. The disciplining

techniques, the programs and incentives that constitute the strategies of governmentality are articulated by modes of subjectification (as carried out in the prison, the school, the sciences, the health and welfare services, the bureaucratic unions, the traditional political parties) that seek to regulate and create the subjects of government to guarantee the proper functioning of the market. These technologies are the result of specific moments in history where policy and strategies were implemented to respond to the resistance and subversion of movements aiming at societal change. Through the implementation of the *Planes Jefes y Jefas de Hogar* (welfare plans), distributed in the poor neighborhoods through the "punteros", the state produced an apparatus of subjectification of the excluded population, that the Kirchner government perfected with the creation of subsidies for the unemployed workers' micro-enterprises[lxxxvi], a move that, as we have seen, effectively introduced the logic of the state into organizations that were initially conceived as autonomous, aimed at building power-with through solidarity practices.

Subjectification processes are never ending creations of resignification of subjectivities —never reaching the state of completion (Butler 1992). These processes are possibilities, freedom and subjection, since power (in the form of subjectification) only operates over free subjects. It is important to understand that these processes of creation of the subject are not equal to a full determination of the same. Subjectification is not a founding act, but rather a process of constant repetition that fixates meanings and significations. These repetitions of signification are at times interrupted, as crisis or pauses in discourse (Gibson-Graham 2006) open spaces or lines of fracture that allow for the creation of new subjectivities, as during the mid-nineties and early 2000s in Argentina. It is along those lines of fracture that social movements in Argentina have

been experimenting with a new kind of political culture in their organizations, through which new subjectivities are being produced. These organizations are characterized by a concern and a focus on territory (the space inhabited by the movements) a tendency toward egalitarian hegemonies, incipient leadership of women, and direct action (Svampa 2007) as the preferred method to bring around societal change.

The rebellion of December 2001 marks the turning point in the political culture of social movements in Argentina. The chant of those days "*Que se Vayan Todos*", throw them all out, indexes to a rejection of political parties and representational politics. Unemployed workers organizations, popular assemblies of middle class neighbors and factories under worker control engaged in practices of direct action and direct democracy that transformed their workplaces and organizational structures into laboratories for the creation of new subjectivities[lxxxvii]. The fact that these new subjectivities, particularly in the recovered factory movement, did not evolve, for the most part, in classic class consciousness has posed many problems to orthodox Marxists and Anarchists, as they were expecting a more clear anti-capitalist stance from these organizations. However, as Guillermo Almeyra points out, the recovered factory movement was a defensive response to deteriorating structural conditions. Other than struggling to get their source of income back, what was left to these workers was beggary or starvation (Almeyra 2004). Previous to the take-over, the workers in these factories had not developed a utopian vision of society, nor did they develop it later. Although some of the leaders of the movement had been activists during the seventies, for the most part the workers who took over the means of production were mainstream people without an alternative vision of society. Perhaps as a result of this, the struggle for survival did not spark an anti-capitalist

consciousness, which could point to the limits of a political struggle based on survival needs as a school for subjective changes that could lead to anti-capitalist political action. While the experience of recovering a factory was a major factor in the changes of these workers subjectivities, to understand the limits of this change one must bear in mind that the left was at least partially defeated during the years of the genocide in Argentina (1976-1983). This defeat was not only material, in the sense that many leftists were first disappeared and then killed, but also discursive. Perhaps the most important conservative victory was that the Argentine left, its political parties, organizations, and ideas, became discredited. Their discredit stems not only out of the fear and distrust sown by the military during the dictatorship, but also due to the centralized leftist parties' own performances of leftist macho hegemonic masculinity, which oppressed their membership.

New Subjectivities in the Economies of Solidarity

Without losing sight of the fact that the recovered factory movements experiences are limited in their autonomy from the state and market[lxxxviii], I argue that they nevertheless constitute egalitarian spaces where new subjectivities can develop, as many of these novel enterprises have strong prefigurative characteristics (Vieta 2009) and have allowed for some women to move out of the production line to take on new challenging jobs, such as administration. Likewise, most of the PPs were not completely autonomous from the State, and had to buy most of their supplies from the market, but they constituted conscious attempts to re-think personal bonds and connections, as an important characteristic of these autonomist and autonomous movements is the strengthening of community bonds by paying special attention to interpersonal relations.

As Aníbal Quijano (Quijano 2006) notes, the most important difference between market oriented enterprises versus PPs and recovered factories does not lie in their connection with the market and internal division of labor, but rather in their concern around issues of autonomy, participatory democracy, egalitarianism, and solidarity. In my view, it is in the quest for democracy, solidarity and egalitarianism that we find the cause for changes in subjectivities of those involved.

I will first address changes in subjectivities that I observed at the Cooperativa La Nueva Esperanza, the site of my research on recovered factories, and will address later changes observed and reported in the PPs of the unemployed worker movement, in both cases paying especial attention to what it means for women to be part of these economies of solidarity, and what are the gender issues at stake in this process.

Balloons for Social Change

La Nueva Esperanza was born out of the ashes and rubble of a fraudulently bankrupted corporation, Global S.A. The old hierarchical pyramid of Global S.A., with the owner at the top, the managers in a second layer of command and the workers at the bottom was initially replaced by groupings in complex rankings where the ranking of individuals changed in different situations. Once the managers and the owners left (with the exception of Domingo, the personnel manager who would later become the President of the Coop) the plant workers and the ex-personnel manager had to figure out how to deal with production and commercialization issues. Following the example of the factories that had been recovered earlier, and taking into account the advice of groups such as the Movement of Recovered Factories, the workers started holding non-

hierarchical assemblies where they discussed how to first recover the machinery, then the original building, and finally get the factory back to production and commercialization.

A single family had owned the factory for over 50 years. For the last ten, however, the factory ended up in the hands of one of the in-laws, who, according to La Nueva Esperanza's coop members, was mean spirited, and did not have a good sense of business. This, combined with the disastrous economic situation of the country at the time, explains, in their view, why the factory, which had employed more than 100 people in the past, went down in a few years. Although those with high qualifications had earned good salaries up to that point, soon they all began facing forced "holidays" and suspensions. At some point, they were not paid at all. Soon after that, they found the doors locked and were forced to start a long struggle to recover the machinery and the building.

The Personnel Manager at the time, Domingo, did not have a relationship with the workers, since the owner did not allow him to communicate with the workers. It made it easier to "discipline" them when they were late for work, for example. The workers, as my friend at the factory, Carmen, told me, did not talk to each other and hated the owner. Many also had serious issues with Domingo, who had been in charge of handing them their suspension slips. The struggle for recover the factory, however, forced them to get acquainted with each other. During the 10 months they spent in a tent, guarding the machinery, they began to engage with each other in new ways. Although there were many conflicts between them, some of them stemming from the past, some stemming from the new challenges they faced, they eventually were able to work together toward the common goal of building a coop out of the ashes of the old balloon factory. As they

did so, leaderships were tried out, and although many had resisted and fought with Domingo, eventually some of the women from the coop (the same who would later become the executive council) called Domingo back. Although the ex-Personnel Manager had managerial skills and contacts with the old Global customers, in the new structure there was no room for hierarchical leadership. Given that at the beginning there was hardly any money to compensate for their efforts, only a structure where people felt comfortable and with the capacity to have their voices heard would work. Although not all of them were committed to this effort in the same way, with conflicts and small victories, the workers eventually collectively created a structure that empowered them. Their organizing strategies, as I will explain later, were also in part the result of the influence of many other movements who had adopted similar organizing structures and were supportive of their efforts.

To this day, decisions are made in assemblies. Although women represent only half of the workforce, they are the majority of five-member executive council, composed of four middle age women and a middle age man. The four women, former machine operators, were not part of the administration of the factory before the takeover. I asked Domingo why he thought these women had been granted such responsibility, since it was surprising to me that in an industrial environment in Argentina, women would be allowed to fulfill roles that in a traditional factory would fall under "managerial roles". He simply stated that it was because women were smart, more responsible, and more willing to work for long hours than men. Moreover, women not only worked as much as men, but once their work was completed, they still had time to attend meetings with other coops to strategize for potential collaborations.

As time went by, the initial fluid heterarchies[lxxxix] of this factory were replaced by a seemingly more stable hierarchical organization. That hierarchy, however, is checked and balanced by the general assembly of all coop members. This new structure allows, and is explained by important changes in the subjectivity of the workers, as they strive to transform themselves from salaried employees to cooperative members, fully responsible for the operation of their workplace. Previously, discipline was in the hands of the management, and was thus external to the workers. Instead, since the take over, discipline and productivity issues are handled by the assembly that sets the general norms, as in hours of work per day and productivity standards. Domingo and the Executive Council inform, once a month, of the financial situation of the coop. Once the initial information is laid out, any member can talk and recommend a course of action. At the end of the assembly, they take a binding vote. The Executive Council later follows on those norms, having the capacity to suspend or even recommend the expulsion of newly hired, aspiring coop members. Without an owner to impose what work needed to be done, by whom and with what compensation, the workers were forced to talk and deal with each other —an apparently simple situation that had, nevertheless, important consequences not only for the way the coop functions, but most importantly for their own lives.

I argue that the need to communicate in order to make the factory work gave rise to interpersonal relations, which were not present before, indexing to prefigurative politics that stress care for personal human connections. For the most part, the recovered factories have strong prefigurative components, which are not only manifested in their interpersonal relations, but also in their efforts toward building community in their

neighborhoods, through different programs, including the "Bachilleratos Populares", where adults can obtain their high school diplomas, and community art centers which operate within their premises.

Bankruptcy and Fire

When I first walked into La Nueva Esperanza in January 2005, I saw that 30 percent of the interior walls were partially burned, and three roofs had collapsed. The workers informed me that this was the result of an intentional fire, started by the last owner of Global S.A. The new clean walls were a material metaphor of the processes of these workers, who went from brutal exploitation and dependency to engaging in a new way of reproducing their material needs while developing new subjectivities through the struggle. The workers were producing balloons, as they had just received their first order since recovering the machinery and occupying the building. Their workspace had no ventilation system and I found it difficult to breathe. However, they were happy: working 12 hour shifts, seven days a week, the workers were attempting to rescue their workplace after years of management neglect. I saw them speeding away in lines of production that went from dipping molds into chemical baths to pulling the finished balloons out of the molds, all of them covered in the talcum powder used to separate the latex balloons from the wooden molds. Although at this point their working hours were longer than when they were employed by Global S.A., and they were not making much money, they told me that what was fresh in their minds were the ten months they had spent in a tent they had placed in front of a shed. The shed hosted the balloon making machines that the owner of Global S.A. had stolen from the original factory, to avoid loosing them in the bankruptcy procedures. During the months in the tent, some of them

were employed in unstable, odd jobs while others received small welfare benefits, and yet others struggled with economic support from better off family members.

The recovery of the machines generated a lot of excitement among the activists connected with the recovered factory movement, since it was the first —and to this day the only— time that workers were able to successfully return assets to a recovered factory. The owner of Global S.A. had taken the machinery away from the original building to start a new business with new employees, free of the creditors and the pesky unpaid workers, and free of the union and State harassment over neglected dues and fiscal debts. One morning, the workers showed up for their 6 AM shift to find an empty factory and locked doors. This had been preceded by months of unpaid wages and, as the workers found out later, non-payment of union dues and social security withholdings, which had been discounted from paychecks but never handed over to the State and the union.

Following a tip from Domingo, the Personnel Manager at the time, the workers pursued the owner for several days, until they found the new factory. The Global workers explained the situation to the new employees, and the newly hired workers abandoned the building. A few hours later, the workers installed a tent in front of the shed and started a 10-month-long guard of the machines. When the owner saw the tent, he went back to the original factory and set it on fire. A neighbor called the firefighters who were able to stop the fire before it reached the gas pipes. The firefighters estimated that had the pipes caught on fire, the whole city block could have blown up.

These were trying times for everybody, but especially for the women, who constituted half of the global working force at the time (approximately 40 people). As

they explained to me, although at the beginning both men and women participated in the shifts in the tent, gradually it was mainly the women who were there all the time. The shed was located in a rural area, and although a local union offered support, the women were many times by themselves. Once, a man attacked two of them, hitting Eva with a bottle on the head, and punching Claudia's face. The man did not attempt to rob them, so the workers reasoned that the owner had sent somebody to attack them. The attack on these two women, who had been spending many months guarding the machinery in the tent, prompted the workers to abandon the lawyer who had advised them so far, and seek the help of the Movimiento Nacional de Empresas Recuperadas (MNER). The MNER was at the time one of the most important social movement engaged in the take-over of factories[xc]. Led by a radical Peronist —Eduardo Murúa— the MNER assisted and helped coordinate the take-over and economic recovery of bankrupted factories across the country. When consulted by Domingo, the ex-Personnel Manager, Murúa offered a truck from IMPA, a recovered aluminum factory, and "compañeros" to help move the machinery back to the original factory. As Claudia explained, the workers broke the shed's padlock one night, and changed it with their own padlock. However, when on the set morning Murúa and his "compañeros" did not appear in time, Eva, Claudia, and Norma took matters in their hands, rented three trucks and brought the machinery back to the original factory.

At this point, Murúa and his "compañeros" had arrived as well and helped move the machinery inside the factory. Somebody alerted the Federal Police, and several cruisers were displayed in front of the factory. The police requested documents to prove that the workers were the owners of the machinery and the factory, but were instead

satisfied with a nominal amount of money. They never bothered the workers again. Although this behavior exhibits corruption, it also indexes to the changing social conditions of Argentina at the time, where there was popular support for people who were trying to have an honest job, even if they had to break the locks of individual property to achieve that end.

The process of the recovery of the machinery and building was a trying one that fostered deep changes in the subjectivities of these workers, especially for the women involved. These working class women had led, up to that point, lives that conformed to the norms of what was expected from them: most of them had married, all of them had children, and had worked hard to support their families. None of them had engaged in actions against private property, or had any kind of unionized experience. However, their whole lives were lived within the zones of exclusion of neoliberalism where basic and other needs are many times satisfied in informal ways, from purchases in second hand goods trade fairs, to access to health care through non-professional providers, to traveling to work in non-permitted buses, to receiving small government subsidies through "punteros".

The women now in the Executive Council of the coop built on the skills acquired through a lifetime in the ragged interstices of capitalism to survive those ten months guarding the machinery in the tent. They banked, as well on their personal networks to find the hidden paths of the city that allowed them to elude police controls when removing the machinery. As Domingo explained, these women's commitment to guarding the machinery, their networking skills that helped gather support from organizations and individuals, as well as their initiative to remove the stolen machinery

from the shed, in short, their leadership and smarts involved in this highly unusual and striking operation, explains the reasons why responsibilities were later bestowed on them by the general assembly of all the coop workers.

These smart, strong women constitute the majority of the Executive Council of La Nueva Esperanza. This fact might not seem extraordinary in the United States, but it has outstanding connotations in Argentina, where industrial corporations and cooperatives are for the most part managed by men. In the recovered factory movement, specifically, there are few examples of women in leadership roles[xci], and those only in industries where women are a majority. Paradoxically, I believe it was a genderized division of labor that explained these women's rise within the factory. While many of the men had odd jobs, for the most part the women did not have access to those jobs. The women were either dependant on the unemployment subsidy, as in Claudia's case, or were supported by their extended family, as in Eva's case, or had a husband who remained employed throughout this period, as was the case for Carmen. Thus, they had time in their hands while most of the men had to tend to their jobs. This structural fact does not explain, however, why the women decided to employ that time in the tent, instead of pursuing some other endeavor. The answer, I believe, is that there were hardly any other endeavors to pursue at the time. "We were desperate", Claudia told me. "We would have done anything".

The process of becoming unemployed and the witnessing of the robbery of the machinery by the owner of Global, confirmed something that Claudia, Eva, and Norma had suspected for a long time: the laws were in the hands of corrupt judges. "too much bureaucracy, too slow, too much corruption". As Norma explained: "We gave everything

to the Judge. We told him where the machines were, we presented independent witnesses that had seen the owner set this building on fire, but he did nothing. We know he was given money to stay quiet." In my view, their perception of the laws as in the hands of corrupt judges made them focus on the human beings upholding those institutions. As the institutions failed them, they placed the blame on the individual and distrusted the institution. They connected their pain and suffering with not only structural conditions of unemployment, but also with the human beings responsible for their suffering. As they were leading lives that by necessity operated outside of formal markets and the legalities that protect these markets, activists and University students who were radical Peronists, Marxists, and Autonomists also influenced them. It was, thus, an almost natural conclusion for them to take their own lives and the means to produce it in their own hands. In this sense, the recovered factory movement constitutes an important example of politics by other means, as through direct actions these workers eschewed of traditional politics at the same time that they stopped seeking protection from democratic institutions. Although neoliberal doctrine does support the idea of individuals helping themselves, rather than relying on state help, I believe the recovery of factories was not an intended consequence of the application of neoliberal doctrine, but rather an unintended consequence, as this peculiar self-help process took place through collective action, organized in egalitarian power structures, which embodied, at the same time, prefigurative characteristics. Together with the PPs of the unemployed and middle classes, the recovered factories became part of an alternative power construction where the politics of affection took precedence over the dispossessing nature of neoliberal biopower.

Through this construction, the workers involved in the recovery of this factory could decode the shortcomings of democratic institutions weakened by neoliberalism, as they relied, instead, in their own collective power, and the power held by the multiple connections of the rhizome with activists, workers, unemployed workers, and neighbors who supported them. As I will discuss in the next chapter, during their time in the tent and the process of recovering the machinery, as well as during the vigil that was kept for several months at the recovered factory afterwards, the workers benefitted from an extensive rhizomatic network of people whose everyday lives happen in zones of exclusion —exclusion from employment, from proper health care, from appropriate housing, and from state protection in the face of crimes committed against them. In short, an important part of their lives happen outside of traditional markets and on the fringes of the state.

As mentioned before, prefigurative politics such as the one that animated the recovery of the factory are characterized by politics of affection —a deliberate effort to strengthen bonds of solidarity and care among the participants, and La Nueva Esperanza has not been an exception. As Jorge, one of the youngest coop members explained to me, the workers of the coop became Nereo's only family. Nereo was a 50 year-old man, who was key to the recovery of the machinery and factory. Along with Norma, Eva, Claudia, Domingo, and Emilio, Nereo, a soft spoken, tall man, was part of the group that discovered the machinery hidden in a shed outside of Buenos Aires, and spent much of his time gathering support and information to get the machines back to the factory. Although Nereo's energy was key to keep hopes up and the group together, in 2006, he came down with two kinds of cancer. La Nueva Esperanza's members immediately took

matters into their own hands, helping Nereo pay for doctors and medicines (a necessary step since they still do not have health insurance), and perhaps more importantly, they took turns to care for him during the night at the hospital, and helped him physically and financially to build a better home for himself. Until the very end, Nereo received his full paycheck. Unfortunately, Nereo's body was ravaged by cancer and he died within that year. However, coop members are still caring for another member, Marisa, who suffers from a disease that greatly debilitates her. Although similar to Nereo's situation in that her health is impacted to the point that sometimes she cannot work at all, and normally works less hours (for the same pay) as the other members of the coop, she is not regarded in the same way as Nereo was. Marisa is a difficult, unstable woman who was been accused of different anti-social attitudes by her co-workers. As Eva explained, Marisa, who is not easy to get along with as she has a volatile temper, is at the same time, a woman who has been able to deal with many difficulties in her life. Not only her health is impacted, but she is also poor, the mother of seven children, whose fathers are not around anymore. In Eva's words: "Marisa has the courage and the strength of many women put together". This sick woman, mother of seven children whose ages spanned from 9 to 28 years old, although not easy to get along with, was a source of inspiration for Eva, who thought that if Marisa could hold on through the months in the tent, sick, poor and with many children, there was no reason for her not to continue the struggle, as her situation, although by no means easy, was not as difficult as Marisa's.

Marisa is not Eva's friend. They do not get along. Most workers in the factory do not get along with Marisa. However, she is a "compañera", and is respected and supported as such. The difference between a friend and a "compañera" was explained to

me not by the coop members, but by a "piquetera" in one of the MTDs of the Gran Buenos Aires. My longtime friend María became an MTD member during the 1990s, when she was in her late forties. She responded to an invitation by Darío Santillán, a 19 year-old man who would later be murdered by the police at the Massacre. María, who also has personal issues with other members of her organization, was taught by young Santillán to distinguish between friendship and "compañerismo". "Compañero", which alludes to the act of breaking bread with another person, in Darío's interpretation went beyond friendship, as it is a relationship based on respect. "If I see that you are in need of a helping hand, I have to help you. It is different between friends, friends are just to have fun with, but between "compañeros" it's different, they must sacrifice for each other." Indeed, "compañerismo" and sacrifice were closely linked together at La Nueva Esperanza. As the thirty-five original coop members worked eleven hours a day during five days of the week, and an extra six hours on Saturdays, every day that Marisa takes off to visit her doctor or to rest, adds to the burden of their already heavy-duty schedule. But they do this happily for their "compañera" (who is not necessarily their friend), because "this could happen to any of us, and we need to stick together and support each other so that the coop will be a good thing for all of us" as Domingo explained.

The egalitarian structure of the factory allowed for prefigurative performances of political femininities that placed personal connections in front of profit and individual gain —a characteristic found in many other recovered factories, as reported by researchers (Fernandez 2006; Rebon 2006). In Naomi Klein's and Avi Lewi's movie, *The Take* (Lewis 2004), a woman and her sister narrate how her co-workers supported her during her cancer treatment during the initial months of recovery of the Brukman

factory, a textile were women are the vast majority of workers. Ana Fernandez (2006), analizing those first few months, notices that not only their working environment has changed and become more relaxed, but that most of the workers are clearly rejecting the idea of working for a boss, ever again. Instead, they have set up a number of mechanisms that will allow the factory to function productively, but without falling for top-down hierarchy to achieve this end. Indeed, as Julián Rebón (2006) also points out, many of these factories have been able to create a disciplining structure based not on performances of power over, or domination, but rather on power-with (Ferguson 2009), the capacity to build collective power through community empowerment. Rebón and Fernandez report of several cases where issues of discipline and productivity were discussed in assemblies of all workers. For example, in one of the factories, a young man with an addiction problem that seriously impacted his capacity to work, was not only disciplined, but also supported by other workers, until he was able to control his problem and started working again. While discipline in corporations has the imprint of power-over, of domination, as discipline is exerted from outside of the community of workers, by management, and does not imply necessarily a concern for the worker, in many of these egalitarian structures, discipline comes from within the community. In this way, the impulse behind discipline comes not only from the need to keep a productive enterprise, but also from a deep concern about something that could "happen to any of them", as Domingo explained regarding Nereo's cancer. On the contrary, in a regular hierarchical corporation, management does not envision what happens to a machine operator as something that could also happen to them. Belonging to a higher strata both in society and in the factory, what befalls to a working class person is not the same as what

happens to a manager, even if the same sickness strikes both. While management has better health care plans and in many cases middle class families who can support them in their time of need, workers in the manufacturing plant often times either have access to mediocre health insurance or do not have access at all to private health care, at the same time that their families might not have the material means to support them when in poor health. Thus, in a corporation what "happens to any of them" is not necessarily something that "could happen to any of us", and discipline is imposed from outside, not the result of a community concern, but rather the expression of productivity needs and objectification of the human beings who work at the factory.

Carmen, who accompanied me to Mexico to present at an academic/activist conference, agrees with Domingo in that the factory needs to take care of its members in this way. Carmen explained that she did not know the name of most of the people working there before the take-over. She barely said "hi" to those working in her section. Because as she had quality control responsibilities in the factory it was easier for her not to communicate with the workers as human beings, but just inform on who was producing good quality balloons and who was not. Carmen, who is today the president of the Coop, was born to a destitute family in a poor province in the north of Argentina. Unable to provide for her basic needs, at the age of ten, her mother sent her to Buenos Aires to become a maid in a middle class family, who owned Global S.A. Carmen grew up without any freedoms and with little education. When Carmen turned eighteen, this middle class family arranged for her to start working at the factory. Devoted as she was to this family, Carmen became a straight out taskmaster, bent on improving productivity at any cost. When the original owner died, and the corporation was sold to a relative that

soon ran it down, Carmen's commitment did not diminish, since, as she explained, this impulse to oversee the quality of the production did not die away with the original owner. However, when the corporation was "emptied out" and finally bankrupted, Carmen was forced to meet with her co-workers and began spending time with them at the tent. This time at the tent allowed Carmen, as she explained, to change her way of controlling production later on, during the process of recovery of the business. Although she was as or even more committed to improving production once the business belonged to all of them, Carmen at this point was influenced by the politics of affection that permeated this construction. As I was able to notice during my month-long work at the factory, although Carmen still controls quality, she engages in this process with respect and concern for the well being of those working with her. For example, she noticed that the balloons coming out of a newly hired woman were broken at the edges. She summon the woman doing this work, who was new to the section, and noticed that her hands were torn apart. She asked the woman what was the matter and the worker explained that her skin was delicate and pulling out the balloons from the molds was causing skin injuries to her hands. Carmen talked the issue over with Domingo, who had preceded Carmen as President of the Coop, and together they decided to offer this woman a new job at the factory. I asked Carmen what would have happened to this woman when La Nueva Esperanza was still Global S.A., and she said that this newly hired person would have just been fired, since re-training her in a new section costs time (and money). However, since La Nueva Esperanza became a coop, and members are taking care of by the community of co-workers, this woman, who had been carefully chosen as a future member of the coop, was given a chance to retrain herself and commit to her job.

Contesting Governmentality through Economies of Solidarity: The Proyectos Productivos

Imbued with a similar egalitarian structure as that of the recovered factories, the PPs handle discipline and care in similar ways. Contrary to the practices of the hierarchically centralized unemployed worker organizations, which take away the welfare/work plans from members who do not comply with their work schedule, unemployed worker movements within the field of politics by other means try first different strategies to solve the issues. As Neka, a "referente" in MTD Solano explained, lack of compliance with the working schedule agreed upon is usually decoded by the organization as a political problem. With chronic unemployment, many young people just lack in the experience of working for a living, at the same time that many have become prey to clientelistic practices and are used to receiving benefits for political favors. Thus, the political construction of the PPs had to take into account the social situation that led the MTD membership to life of unemployment. Neka explained that when the "one on one" talk did not succeed in modifying the member's attitude toward work, the situation was addressed in the general assembly of members. In most cases, the collective discussion was sufficient to modify that behavior. However, when this mechanism failed, the member was asked to leave, but left with her plan so that she could either go with a "puntero" and bribe this person to for her welfare/work plan without having to work, or become part of a different MTD where she would have to work her 4 hours/day, five days a week. That is to say, the option of going back to the "puntero", skip work and employ that time doing odd jobs was always a possibility. However, while the MTDs were strong, especially before Kirchner's intervention, most people who participated in the organization chose to stay. Why? In their own words, with the

"puntero" it was "bread for today, hunger for tomorrow". As Idalia, who worked in one of the PPs in the Gran Buenos Aires explained: "The 'puntero' will either ask you to work in his place for a few hours, or give you most of your money (except for the portion he keeps for himself) and a bag of food, but that will be the end of it. On the contrary, participating in this MTD not only allowed me to learn skills that would help me find employment, but most importantly, I am part of a movement". Being part of the movement meant for Idalia more than just obtaining a meager income. While not all MTDs had this arrangement, MTD Solano did not favor individualized appropriation of the surplus produced by the PPs. The surplus generated was used for the movement as a whole. Thus, the surplus was usually assigned to buy medicines for the membership, or to help with transportation for movement activities. Through her participation, Idalia had access to medicines, recycled clothing, food from the soup kitchen (which includes fresh organic vegetables from the MTD gardens) and most importantly, a social construction aimed at freedom and dignity. The "punteros", of course, cannot offer any of the above, especially freedom and dignity[xcii].

This social and political construction was based in a deep questioning of the reasons why so many people found themselves unemployed. It involved —beyond a discussion of the impact of global economics and politics in Argentina and in their neighborhoods— a search for meanings: most specially, a quest for the meanings of unemployment. Although at the beginning, Neka told me, what brought them together was "unemployment, desperation, hunger, and discrimination", this state of guilt (Flores 2002) and shock[xciii] provoked by unemployment soon faded away, as they soon became "ocupados"[xciv] (busy), discussing "new ideas, building knowledge, exchanging

experiences[xcv]" (Vommaro 2003). Through this collective discursive and material practice, the former unemployed workers became autonomous subjects of their own lives. A member of the MTD explained: "We are now busier than ever" (Vommaro 2003: 5), as participating in "the soup kitchen is not something we do only because we are hungry, but also because in this way we are generating the means to solve our problems in an autonomous way and we can share a lot [of ideas] when we sit at the table" (Vommaro 2003: 5).

Politics of Affection

These autonomous subjects place much emphasis on the intersubjective connections that have been developed through the movements and in the PPs. As they believe in politics that will transform the individual, their concern takes into account all aspects of life. Alberto, a "referente[xcvi]" in one of the MTDs explained to me, "for us politics is everything: the everyday life, the issues concerning our bodies, from food to clothing, from health to happiness. For us social change needs to happen here and now." Alberto is alluding to a radical feminist, anticapitalist biopolitics, a concept that, without naming it as such, this MTD developed through conversations with university students, sociologists, anthropologists and other social studies people who constantly visited them. As he told me, they "believe the state and the corporations appropriate our energies, our ideas, as they condition even our capacity to reproduce or not reproduce ourselves, so we are working on a social construction that will allow us to recover all that belongs to us". In order to recover "what belongs to them", they engaged not only in the production of their own lives through the PPs, but also become deeply involved in each others "private" lives. In that sense, the MTDs of my study unknowingly enacted one of the most

important feminist principles: the personal is political. Their reading of personal lives as political led them to question issues of gender oppression in their membership's personal lives. For many women this was a liberating experience valuable in that it went beyond the material benefits acquired through the participation in the PPs and the movement in general. Perhaps the most outstanding case is that of María, who joined an MTD shortly after her husband died in the mid nineties. Interviewing María was a difficult experience. Although I have visited her numerous times in her own home and at the bakery she coordinates, it is always difficult to understand María, not only because her verbal skills are weak ("soy muy bruta", she says, "I am a brute"), but most importantly because she has significant memory loss[xcvii]. As María explained to me numerous times, her husband was abusive of her. Years ago, her "compañeras" and "compañeros" helped her find a doctor that ran a number of tests to determine that what affected her memory were the blows to her head. While her husband was still alive, María, now in her early seventies, did not have a job and devoted all of her time to raising her children in a one bedroom precarious construction, just outside Barrio Don Orione. Barrio Don Orione, where María moved to a few years after her husband died and she had joined the MTD, is a 200 hundred block low-income housing project built in the 1980s, during the last dictatorship. As most of the buildings constructed by the military to eradicate shanty-towns, it is a complex of drab and grey two or three storey buildings where 43,000 people live in sad conditions. By now, most of the cheap plumbing has deteriorated and most folks' bathrooms have broken, while the whole neighborhood is littered with trash. Although more people have jobs now than in the nineties, which has led to an improvement in their living conditions, their situation is still difficult. Many children are fed at the MTDs soup

kitchens, but when I began visiting in 2002, I also witnessed numerous times children eating out of garbage cans.

Well-fed or not, there are children everywhere here. Many women have their first child at an early age, many times in their teenage years. What leads them to have children so early, Maria explained, is that women are not, in general, appreciated when they are young. It is only motherhood that gives them the status of an adult[xcviii]. But that is not the only reason why these young women are pregnant often. There are many factors contributing, ranging from the Catholic Church's influence over the sexual and reproductive habits of the population, to partners' macho stances, as in the case of María's husband. María has now four surviving children, but she birthed nine babies. Many years ago, she decided that she did not want to raise any more children and started taking contraceptive pills, without telling her husband. "When he found out, he beat me and threw the pills away. He said we were going to have all the children that god wanted us to have. It was fine with him when children were born to me, since I was the only one who had to endure them!" Later on, María asked him to use condoms. His answer consisted in two blows to her head. When María found herself pregnant again, she asked her sister, a nurse, to help her out. As many women in Argentina, where abortion is illegal but nonetheless more than 500,000 are practiced every year[xcix], María, with her sister's aid, attempted a non-safe, painful abortion procedure that did not work the first time. When her sister came back to try it again, her husband found them out and drove her sister out of the house. Thus, María kept raising children in conditions of extreme poverty. Understandably, she hated this man, but continued to live with him until he died, slowly, and at the early age of 48. "He used to hit me, but I, little by little… I killed

him in the end!" laughs María. María complains that younger women, like her own daughters, "cannot tolerate anything" and separate from their husbands or partners when they are mistreated. I asked María if this did not make sense to her, but she answered that it did not, that a wife needs to stick by her husband: "I tolerated my husband for forty years, and he used to beat me up ('me cagaba a trompadas'), but they had a mother and a father who were together". Submission to her husband was not something she would ever question, but once he died, and María found herself in need of money, she joined the MTD and not only accessed a welfare plan that allowed her to survive with her children, but most importantly, María "found her courage".

María could have accessed a welfare plan faster and in a more secure manner through a "puntero". However, she decided not to seek this traditional route because "I hate politics" she explained. "What we do at the MTD is not politics, we are piqueteros". A "piquetero", in María's words is somebody who is there "to help the people" ("para ayudar al pueblo"), to obtain what they need, "a bed, medicine", and other basic needs, but not somebody who is there to cause problems. Through this engagement with a group that was not about electoral politics, but instead fostered "compañerismo", María found her strength, her courage, her "coraje", as she ventured outside of her home. Until she became a "piquetera" María never went outside of her home without an escort, first her husband, and then her older male children. However, in the MTD María's life experienced a huge change, as her newly acquired "coraje" was connected with her duties as "seguridad" (security), a role that for her was not necessarily connected with physical violence, but rather with taking care of her compañeras and "compañeros". I will discuss María role at the road blockades in the next chapter, while I focus here on another

dimension of Marías "coraje": the everyday construction of a PP, a bakery in Don Orione. Although nowadays María complains that "they" (the leadership) make decisions without asking "la base"(the grassroots), she still has the ability to coordinate work and welfare plans at the bakery that was recently opened by the movement in Don Orione[c].

At the bakery, María exerts the gentle leadership that characterizes performances of political femininities in the field of politics by other means. María draws a sharp distinction between friendship and "compañerismo". María misses the days of old, when the "piqueteros" were more numerous and had strong morals, in her view, product of the dangerous struggle they were involved in. As many times "piqueteros" would be repressed in the road blockades or kidnapped later in their neighborhoods (allegedly by "punteros" or plain clothes police officers) re-appearing hours later beat up, they developed strong bonds[ci] and morals, that translated into work ethics at the PPs[cii]. María, who had to give up her duties in "seguridad" as her older heart cannot take all the running implied in the task, explains that since matters have cooled down in the highways, so have the hearts of those involved in the PPs, where only one woman among the ten PP members was part of the road blockades in the early 2000s.

For María, between friends things can be hushed. For example, if somebody did not attend to his or her work, a friend might chose to cover up for this person so that this person avoids a given penalty for not attending to his or her post. But between "compañeros" for María, it should be different. María who is part of a prefigurative organization, understands that "compañero" is an important construction in social movements that demands not personal sacrifices for the higher goal of the organization,

as in leftist revolutionary political parties (Zibecchi 2003; Melucci 1996) but rather a commitment to create strong affective bonds among participants, as a way of embodying in the present the politics of the future. In other words, the "compañera" is not expected to sacrifice for the future of the revolution, but rather she is expected to engage deeply in the everyday construction of her movement, by helping others in need. As María explained, "Our sacrifice has to be the same for all of us".

Sacrifice she did, not only taking care of her compañeras and "compañeros", to the point of endangering her own life at the road blockades, but she also had fun, un-chaperoned, unchartered, and unsupervised, for the first time in her life. The MTD's membership was deeply engaged in building strong bonds among the membership, and parties and social events were important to help people get acquainted with each other. Another member of that same MTD, Yolanda, who organized a bakery in a very poor neighborhood close to Don Orione, explains: "Before I started with the MTD, I didn't know anybody in my neighborhood. I have lived here for thirty years, in this same house, but I knew nobody. Mi life was my kids and my home. That was the end of my life, there was nothing else, except for work" (Interview by Colectivo Nómade). María narrates a similar story, in that she had no friends in the neighborhood, and her social life was limited to her numerous family. As this was the situation for most people in that area, especially women who were bound to their homes by patriarchal notions of modesty and chastity, great efforts were made to help the unemployed workers socialize beyond the everyday work at the PPs.

Because they are not aimed at state power, and thus have no expectations of great changes to come after the revolution, as leftist political parties do, it is important for

prefigurative movements to rise above the every day pain of living in poverty, with limited access to vital resources. They wanted to collectively produce a life that was worth living, without having to wait for a better future. Producing this life was not only done through their work at the PPs, but also in less likely situations, such as parties and celebrations. The parties at María's MTDs were legendary. Whether caused by the exhilaration of wrestling welfare plans from the local "punteros", or to celebrate the inauguration of a new shed, there were plenty of occasions in which the membership engaged in non-remunerative work to guarantee a good time for everybody. It was in one of these parties that María, in her sixties, became acquainted with a 19 year old man, Marcelo. María, a woman who had been abused severely by her husband, began enjoying life with a young lover. María's children, some of them older than Marcelo, were angry at her, not only for her involvement with a much younger man, but also because they did not agree with her life as a "piquetera". As Eva, one of her children told me, "My mom was an embarrassment to us in those days". Eva and the rest of María's surviving children would have rather María remained indoors and not be involved in the burning of tires in highways. That she became the lover of a younger man only added to their public humiliation. Although she loves her children, and sacrificed much of her life to stay with their abusive father in the perception that in this way she was helping them by having a "complete" family, at this point in life, unemployed, a widow, with grown children, María was beyond caring for what others in her neighborhood and even her own family might think. María, who can be hard on her own children, became enamored of the struggle and those who struggled with her, and found a different, more understanding, less constricting new family in the MTD. As she gave herself entirely to this new life,

María explains that she found her "corage", not only to brave the police at the road blockades and help her compañeras and "compañeros", but most importantly to devote her high energy to the construction of the PPs. Marías new life was made possible by the support and "compañerismo" she experienced in this egalitarian construction, and the by material resources that working at the MTD provided for her and her family.

Impoverished Middle Class Women and the Solidarity Economy

The experience of constituting the field of politics by other means through their participation in different MTDs and PPs, seemed to have affected working class women's lives more deeply than it affected that of the middle class women who participated in the organizations within this field. However, participation in movements such as La Junta (fictional name), and some other assembly derived organizations empowered women in important ways, although not necessarily the same as those associated with participation in the MTDs and PPs of the unemployed workers. While working class women benefitted from traveling outside of their homes and territories, networking with women in similar situations, at the same time that they acquired material resources that allowed them to be independent, middle class women like Mariela, experienced deep transformations in their subjectivities as they became involved in non-capitalist economic exchanges.

La Junta is a space created by the popular assembly movement, which is not only devoted to political and cultural meetings, but also hosts a number of PPs, most of them connected with food and household needs. Mariela, an undergraduate student, became acquainted with La Junta through connections with fellow and former students who were active in the popular assembly movement and invited her to attend meetings. So far,

Mariela explains, “my life had been useless”. Although an anti-capitalist, Mariela could not find her own space within any of the political parties active at her university. Mariela, who attended meetings of several revolutionary parties, became disillusioned with their “power-over” strategies, as she realized that they were not interested in her ideas, or experiences, but rather they wanted to use her for their own means. She explained that she got tired of being invited to protests and meetings where older men were constantly explaining to her ideas that, for Mariela, had no appeal. Although she shared with these parties their orientation toward social change, she wanted a change that would happen in the here and now, and that would involve her as a whole human being, and not as “a soldier of the revolution”, as she put it. “I used to hate politics, especially after my experiences with revolutionary parties. But now I find that there are different kinds of politics. What I do now is political, because I have become aware of how power in society operated over me. What I do now is more than politics, it’s life itself”.

Mariela found life itself in the egalitarian construction of La Junta, a multiage group of initially over one hundred people, today reduced to approximately forty, with only two of the original people who created the space still active[ciii]. La Junta is located in Buenos Aires, in an abandoned house in a middle class neighborhood. During the height of the popular assembly mobilization in the early 2000s, members of the Asamblea Mario Rivero took over an abandoned house. Although the composition of this group has changed considerably since those days, their organizing principles still hold. Lacking in all centralization, La Junta is however capable of running several PPs, including an urban organic garden, commercialization at fair prices of household cleaners, a small bakery, organic food catering, and other PPs. Mariela, whose life was wasted, as she puts it, in

recreational drugs and excessive partying, found at La Junta "compañeras" and "compañeros" that not only engaged in decoding neoliberalism's connection with their own personal lives and situation, but also helped her frame a new way of living. For a number of years, Mariela, a sociology student, worked at a relative's store, selling gold. This young woman felt terrible about her job, as she was conscious of the polluting materials and techniques used in the extraction of gold, and the negative consequences that the exploitation of this mineral had for the Argentine population[civ]. However, although an anti-capitalist, Mariela had not been able to figure out a way to withdraw from this job, which she felt was polluting her life, as the extraction of the mineral she was selling polluted the Earth. Finally, when she began organizing with La Junta, Mariela was able to join in a number of PPs, and start one of her own as well.

Together with Marcelo and Javiera, two former students of the nearby University, Mariela began fractioning and selling high quality, non-polluting household cleaning products as well as homemade bread. Through these activities, although she could not generate as much money as when selling gold in her relative's shop, she was able to support herself in a manner that, in her view, fell outside of capitalist relations of production. Although she made enough money to live on through her work in these PPs, her aim was not to profit but to engage in an activity that would fulfill her own material needs at the same time that it provided the community with something the community needed, produced in a way that was respectful of nature and of the people involved in the PPs. Mariela's life, thus, embodies the prefigurative aspect of these movements as her energies are now part of an alternative power construction, as her economic, political, and personal selves are not separated from each other. As her basic needs are met also within

this alternative construction, which enables her to stop spending her energies in the commercialization of gold, a mineral whose exploitation she is conscious generates serious environmental and health issues.

Mariela's shift in subjectivity originates, according to her narrative, in the mid 1990s when she watched her father go bankrupt, as so many other middle class people did while structural adjustment measures racked the country. Along with many in the middle class, Mariela's dad plunged below the poverty line when he lost his general store in a town built around the oil industry in southern Argentina. When the previously state-owned oil industry was sold to foreign capital, the corporation closed down several refineries, which cause many oil towns to suffer brutal unemployment, reaching in some cases to 90 percent of the local population. As the ex-oil employees' severance packages ran out, there was no money to support any local stores, and Mariela's father had to close it down. His reaction was not unusual, as he became depressed and was unable to find a way out of this situation. Mariela watched him crumble under his inability to support her family, and as her mother found a job as a clerk in a small corporation, Mariela began drawing conclusions about life, work for profit, and community. Although initially seduced by the heroic rhetoric of revolutionary parties, Mariela soon realized that her path was different, in that she wanted to work, live, and build community outside of logics of exploitation. Mariela explained that these logics were embodied both in older male comrades in the parties, as well as in the corporation that would grant her a small salary at the cost of her complicity in destroying the environment and the populations that survived in it. The prefigurative politics of La Junta allowed Mariela to integrate her life, as she was able to make a living in a way that was respectful of own self, her

environment, and of the people with whom she collaborated in the PPs. Thus, Mariela feels today as a wholesome human being, one that needs not be torn between satisfying her basic needs, struggle for social change, and engage in politics of affection with her fellow La Junta members.

The problems

The obstacles and problems encountered by the PPs and recovered factories were multiple, and stemmed from different sources. The popular assembly movement, from its very beginning, had to deal and confront the leftist macho hegemonic masculinity embodied in leftist, centralized political parties. Unlike the spokescouncil of the US anticorporate globalization movement, in the case of the popular assemblies although efforts were made to reach agreements, the final decision was reached by voting —a methodology that eventually caused many issues and contributed to bring most of these organizations down, as those who lost felt left out of the process. Voting, as opposed to working towards consensus, further empowered members of Marxist political parties with a capacity to mobilize their constituency, until the climate became so partisan and hostile that those with less experience in activism ceased to attend, demoralized by the angry, violent climate that permeated the meetings (Triguboff 2008). The non-hierarchical groupings where autonomist organizers envisioned prefigurative spaces, clashed against the party logic of increasing their numbers at any cost. Thus, aggressive performances of masculinities exerting power-over the participants of the assemblies made it all but impossible for performances of political femininities to bloom. The lefist macho hegemonic masculinist, war-oriented logic of the organizations whose goal is the

take-over of the state all but squashed the gentle prefigurative logic that animated the popular assemblies.

However, and in spite of the withdrawal of many participants in the popular assembly movements, the PPs organized by them, or by movements like La Junta whose origins can be traced to the creation of those egalitarian spaces in the early 2000s, were for the most part successful. They offered a space where women, and men, could collectively empower themselves by participating in egalitarian constructions that provided, as well, a small income in times of need. The situation, however, was quite different in the PPs of the unemployed worker movements. Unlike the PPs organized by the middle class in their neighborhoods, the PPs of the unemployed were raised in opposition to the "punteros". The aim of the PPs was to empower their own constituency. As they took care of needs within their territory, their very existence limited the power of the Peronist party in the areas where they organized, as PPs competed with "punteros" over the harnessing of the energy of this sector of the population[cv]. As Auyero (2009) explains, clientelism should be studied not as in opposition to mobilization, but rather clientelism should be analyzed in the interaction between forces that want to mobilize against certain economic and political projects, and the "punteros", who want to mobilize to support the government in power, or to destabilize it, as was apparently the case during the lootings around Buenos Aires in 2001. Envisioned as an obstacle to clientelistic ways of building power, unemployed workers who were committed to the construction of the PPs were not only the object of police and at times National Guard repression of their road blockades, but also many times were beat up, harassed, kidnapped and threatened in their own neighborhoods, as

the "punteros" were eager to stop their practices because they offered a way to obtain welfare plans outside of the "puntero" system. Physical repression was deployed on the core members, while material benefits were offered to people who were less committed to the emancipatory project of the PPs. As Marcela, in one of these MTDs explained: "The 'punteros' exploit people's needs. They'll give them some meat, a bag of groceries, and offer them a welfare plan." When receiving a plan directly from a "puntero", many times the recipient does not need to work, just bribe the "puntero" with a percentage of what they receive from the plan. Thus, the worker is free to seek out odd jobs to add up to the small amount of money received through the welfare plan.

The combination of repression and neoliberal governmentality proved a valuable tool against the PPs, as members without past political experience were terrorized by the Massacre and other instances of repression, at the same time that the material incentives to leave the organizations and receive welfare directly from the "punteros" contributed to keep potential members away from these social movements, or to bring over to the punteros those activists who had previously organized with the MTDs. This tactic was successful in the Zapatista communities in Chiapas, as well, where the government abandoned the tactic of just using physical repression of the communities and started combining what the Zapatistas refer to as a low-profile war with material benefits for people who abandon the Zapatistas. The "puntero" practice of offering food and more stable access to welfare plans eroded the capacity of the PPs to organize unemployed workers beyond the damage that the road blockade repressions caused to their membership. It became an everyday war of attrition in which many promising PPs

members ended up leaving the enterprises as they crossed camps and worked for, or bribed the "punteros".

The underhanded methods of the "punteros", combined with President Kirchner's particular ways of financing PPs and microenterprises originally created by unemployed workers had a deep impact on the movements. As Marcés, in one of the MTDs in the south of Buenos Aires explained to me, when the government gave money for the PPs, they gave this money to one person, who became responsible for the outcome of the PP. The assignation of financial support to one single person introduced the logic of single ownership in projects that could only be feasible if undertaken with a vision and commitment to social change, in the present time and space. The struggle of the PPs had been geared toward a social construction of community and most of the movements had no coordinator, or boss, to control activities. Rather, the control was communal, as members of the PPs would get together once a week to discuss plans and objectives. This privileging of politics over production shows that the MTD understood that the political construction of the movement was key to building an economy of solidarity. They were aware that it was not in isolation that they would triumph over the "punteros" and State repression, so they engaged in political constructions that would strengthen their membership, allowing them to envision the space to create webs of solidarity beyond their own movement. As Marcés explained, "The problem is that our autonomy is restricted. We are still under the yoke of the State because we accept [welfare] plans and subsidies. What we want is to create a web of alternative production". However, as they lacked in capital and were forced to accept state support, they could not break free of this

logic, which slowly but relentlessly began to insidiously influence the whole organization.

In 2001, this MTD was organizing approximately 1200 families. After the Massacre in 2002 and Kirchner's subsidies in 2003, their membership was reduced to less than 400 families. Today, this MTD has been reduced to a small group of militants, with interesting ideas, but hardly any social construction in their territory. The membership disbanded, as sectors of the leadership began to exert power over those members who were less committed to the ideals of Autonomism. As Eva, one of the many women who abandoned the organization, explained, the leaders "started acting like bosses ('patrones') or punteros'". In her eyes, these men and women who had shown such commitment to an egalitarian engagement in the struggle in the past, at some point began ordering her what to do. For example, one day, the leadership found out that a US writer and activist was visiting different social movements, and they wanted her to believe that their organization still had the power of past years. As Eva narrated and I later corroborated with other activists involved, one day they received the "order" to show up at a small field where the organization had previously planned to plant crops. They were surprised, because the project of planting this field had been abandoned at the time when the "troubles" began, months ago. Although the connection between the "referentes" and the grassroots was tense to the point that there had been no assemblies of all membership for over three months, on this day they were told that if they wanted to receive next week's bags of food[cvi], they had better show up at the field for a workday. When they arrived, they were given shovels and other tools and were told to clean up the weeds. Soon thereafter, the US writer-activist came for a visit, leading a group of US students who were doing an

internship at a different MTD. The US writer-activist had been shocked to find out that these students were paying a modest amount of money to the MTD that was hosting them, and wanted to show these students how real solidarity worked. Little did she know that those they found working the fields that day had arrived to the conclusion that receiving their welfare plan from this autonomist organization was no different than receiving it from a "puntero" these days. Although in the past this MTD had been characterized by radical-non-hegemonizing femininities and masculinities, toward the end, the organization engaged in displays of leftist macho hegemonic masculinity and macho hegemonic femininity that greatly oppressed the membership. Another example of these performances were the numerous times that, when accused of mismanagement of funds, the "referentes" would not show their "compañeras" and "compañeros" the bank account statements. Thus, not long after the introduction of the subsidies, the MTDs became "balkanized", as different PPs —"owned" now by individuals— were pitched against each other. Eventually, displays of aggressive hegemonic masculinity and macho hegemonic femininities, mismanagement of funds, individual appropriations, and bitter disputes over machinery and resources brought the organization down.

Conclusions

Having enjoyed almost full employment and high living standards (for South America) in the past, the population was outraged at the dismal living conditions promoted by neoliberal policies. Thus, when the economic crisis deepened in the nineties and early 2000, important numbers of people became active in politics and protests. Those involved in the recovered factories and the PPs were able to challenge governmentality, by organizing collectively, through economic solidarity practices and

egalitarian non-hierarchical, "horizontal" power structures that were enabled by radical, non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities performances of power. These performances were characterized mainly by constructions of power-with, the power to build communities that have the capacity to empower all individuals involved, and not just the few who coordinated the different projects. Through politics of affection that involved not only the production of their material life but also their affects, an alternative power construction came to be.

The appearance of this construction within the field of politics by other means is explained by a myriad of force relations that came into friction (Tsing 2005) in Argentina, with the structural adjustment at its base, the deepening of the economic and social crisis, and the corruption of the courts and of government officials who were envisioned as managers of the IMF. Activists that either had negative experiences with leftist political parties in the past, or had no experience in parties at all, processed these factors as a confirmation that under neoliberalism state institutions became tools to apply the economic and social policies of the International Monetary Fund. Those who had been active in politics and who had upheld leftist political orientations, either as Guevarists, Leninists, or Trotskyist interpreted the fall of the Soviet Union, as well, as the ultimate proof against state oriented practices of social change, at the same time that they started paying attention to the Zapatista constructions in Mexico. Thus, an important number of social actors became involved in egalitarian (horizontal) community constructions that would challenge neoliberal aims of creating isolated individuals that would comply with the mandates of the market, or accept meager welfare benefits in exchange for their overexploited labor. They engaged, instead, in the creation of a

solidarity self, that would rise over the murky environment of clientelistic politics by embracing a prefigurative construction. The confluence of these activists with unemployed workers, plus the alliance that some were able to establish with middle class movements (the popular assemblies), and the recovered factory movement, gave rise to a field where politics were embodied in the present tense, as the prefigurative characteristics of these movements demanded constructions where communities were created in defiance of the isolating forces behind the welfare plans. These plans were designed so that unemployed people would receive them through "punteros" or NGOs in exchange for labor applied according to directives of the "puntero" or coordinator of the NGO. Aimed by similar concerns and ideals, activists involved in the recovered factory movement challenged property rights as they took over the means of production, by creating prefigurative structures that not only guaranteed equal salary to all participants, but rather privileged, as well, community building by stressing affects and care for their membership and communities.

In this way, the PPs and the recovered factories, as egalitarian organizations, constituted excellent spaces for the collective empowerment of women as their structures favored constructions of power with —the power to build community. Women found in the PPs not only very much needed economic support, but perhaps as importantly, instances of socialization beyond their family ties and patriarchal restrictions to their mobility. María, a woman abused by her husband in more than one way, has the power today to remain single while still enjoying her sexual being. Although shocking for her children, María has now a young lover. Older than this young man, this sixty year old woman has now the power to exert respect in her relationship with him. Her

independent, though modest income from the bakery, as well as her access to building materials, food, free bus passes, and other material goods, obtained through the organized efforts of her movement, also provided a source of power that translates into freedoms that she did not enjoy before the MTD.

Although María's bakery, most of the recovered factories, and the PPs of the middle classes continue to modestly flourish, many of the PPs in the hands of the unemployed workers have in many cases disappeared all together. The Massacre broke the alliance between progressive, mobilized middle class sectors and the Autonomist and autonomous unemployed workers. If this alliance had been successful, it is possible that a strong Autonomist web of microenterprises could have been created, as the middle classes were in a better position to resist governmentality in the way of subsidies from the state, while they did not have to deal with the constant attrition of their membership by the "punteros". When this alliance was cut short by the Massacre, the unemployed workers lost their capacity to establish the incipient wide web of economies of solidarity that they had envisioned. Isolated from the more powerful middle class, with hardly any capital, under the pressure of the "punteros" and feeling acutely the effects of the repression, the leadership of the MTDs fell prey to two powerful enemy: the logic of the State and the "referentes" own performances of leftist macho hegemonic masculinity and macho hegemonic femininity. As welfare plans and subsidies could not be avoided, their constructions began resembling that of the "punteros". Given that nobody was earning enough through the PPs it was just a matter of time until people either found a job in the post-crisis capitalist market, or if still unemployed, went to the "puntero" who could at least guarantee that their welfare plans would not be discontinued. Because the

constructions of the PPs were envisioned as a preparation for better projects in the future, their strength lay in the political project that put them together. This project was only possible through the constant building of community. However, as the state was able to introduce its logic of individual appropriation, the community construction flew out the window, replaced by individualistic competition and distrust amid landscapes of aggressive hegemonic political masculinities and hegemonic macho femininities.

The MTDs struggled not only with the discursive and practical attacks of the "punteros", but also with the subjectivities of important sectors of their own membership who were, at least partially, subjects of neoliberal governmentality, as they had lived for most of their lives, if not all, in neighborhoods dominated by clientelism. Life experiences in these cultural processes have long lasting consequences. What was missing was not only capital that would have allowed these PPs to become independent from the state and establish a web of alternative economies, but also time to allow these organizations to develop new cultural processes that could have constituted new subjectivities, this time not just embodied in some people but rather in the majority.

The MTDs challenged but did not prevail upon issues of leftist macho hegemonic masculinity and macho hegemonic femininity among their membership, especially their "referentes". Although initially the male "referentes" were conscious of their past vanguardism and made efforts to overcome their past performances of power-over, as the situation within the PPs became contentious, displays of leftist macho hegemonic masculinity hurt the organizations, as aggressive males fought against each other to prevail over the control of material resources. The few women "referentes" involved,

sadly, behaved in the similar manners, lying, hiding evidence, and sowing distrust among members in order to "divide and conquer" them.

Bleak as these last lines might sound, the experience of engaging in an egalitarian constructions during many years had profound consequences in the development of new subjectivities, especially for the women involved. As most of these women had been home bound by patriarchal rules of propriety, and in many cases had not held jobs before, the experience of meeting with other women outside of their families, working outside of the house, traveling outside of their neighborhoods, making economic and political decisions in community with other neighbors, opened a new life for many of them. In this way the community's energy increased the participants energy, creating an alternative power construction out of this interaction that did not derive from diminishing the power of other organizations. Although some of these women are still struggling in different MTDs, most have become "submerged", but still embody their collectively acquired courage and freedom. In one of the "compañera's" own words: "A 'compañera' in the MTD is not the same as a woman that is not in the organization, and you can see the changes. It's hard, and much time will pass, but we are on our way. Now, I'm more of a woman than before[cvii]" (Verón 2004)

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Notes

[lxi] "Horizontalidad" is the concept used by the social actors of my study to describe non-centralized, egalitarian political constructions, present in the movements of recovered factories, popular assemblies, and some of the unemployed worker movements.

[lxii] [lxii] The "puntero" is the person associated with a political party who promises or distributes material resources in poor neighborhoods, in exchange for political support, whether in the form of voting in elections, or by mobilizing in support of the party when requested to (Auyero 2009)

[lxiii] Ferguson re-conceptualizes of Marx's concept of "from each according to ability, to each according to needs" (Marx [1875] 1986)

[lxiv] Only a minority of movements organized through non-hierarchical organizations, while most were and are either the result of associations, or coordinations with political parties or labor union structures (Delamata 2005: 114).

[lxv] Only a minority of movements organized through non-hierarchical organizations, while most were and are either the result of associations, or coordinations with political parties or labor union structures (Delamata 2005: 114).

[lxvi] My analysis of neoliberalism and its stages was developed through my participation in the Social Movements and 21st Century Cultural-Political Transformations, especially through Neal Stephen's research.

[lxvii] The great majority of these enterprises are now working coops, where all members earn the same salary. Important decisions are made in assemblies of all members once a month, which guarantees an important level of egalitarian decision making. A council (elected by all members) carries out these decisions and reports to the general assembly.

[lxviii] There was a major instance of articulation of popular assemblies, the Interbarrial during 2002. Due to a number of issues, the experience was short lived. The main problem was that the Interbarrial could not overcome was the use that different Trotskyist organizations made of it as an instance to increase their numbers. Confrontations between the different Troskyist organizations culminated in a physical fight over attendance to May 1st. acts, that discouraged future participation from non-militants, the majority of those involved (Tiburoff 2008).

[lxix] Foucault explains that throughout liberalism, the state had the power to create life, as opposed to the power to end it, which was emphasized before liberalism. In his view, biopower should be reconsidered under neoliberalism, as he suggests that the emphasis would be more on economic growth that would in turn sustain life, than in sustaining life per se. In that sense, we could understand why the state does not need to harness the energy of the whole population, but only of those who are needed to ensure the economic growth of the markets.

[lxx] "Puebladas" describes insurrections were a whole town takes part in direct actions.

[lxxi] In 2004, the autonomous city of Buenos Aires approved laws that gave the workers of the recovered factories non-permanent and permanent ownership of their factories (Ruggeri 2005a). Later, as elections brought a right-wing Major to the city, efforts have been made by the leaders of the recovered factory movement to try to consolidate a stronger network that will be able to resist evictions, which resulted in the consolidation of the Confederación Nacional de Cooperativas de Trabajo, which includes recovered factories from all over the country, with the exception of the Movimiento Nacional de Empresas Recuperadas, and the Movimiento Nacional de Fábricas Recuperadas (private communication with Andrés Ruggeri).

[lxxii] In Chapter IV, I will re-visit this notion of the multiple layers by comparing the rhizomatic structures of plants' underground nourishing systems with the submerged (Melucci 1989) rhizomatic (Deleuze and Guattari 2008) structure of social movement networks.

[lxxiii] The MTD Aníbal Verón originates as unemployed activists (previously organized in the MTD Teresa Rodriguez (MTR), in Florencio Varela, province of Buenos Aires) start organizing unemployed workers in other neighborhoods of the province of Buenos Aires. As the MTR split, a number of activists constitute the Movimiento de Trabajadores Desocupados in 2001. Soon, the MTD joined forces with other groups, such as Quebracho. Thus, they constitute the Coordinadora Aníbal Verón (CAV), in which groups with radically different orientations were able to coordinate actions, while respecting their diverse political constructions. While some of the groups could be defined as "Peronistas de base" (grassroots Peronists), other groups were Maoists, while four groups defined themselves as Autonomists. After the Massacre, the CAV split, with Quebracho leaving, while the other groups remained together for a few more years. The Autonomist leave in 2003, as they understand that the MTD Aníbal Verón is adopting clientelistic practices, such as taking welfare plans away from people who did not attend piquetes. Soon after, the Maoist sector, MTD Florencio Varela also leaves the MTD. The remaining sectors, "Peronistas de base", joined forces in the Frente Popular Darío Santillán, adopting a more centralized structure.

[lxxiv] Contrary to practices of centralized organizations with cadre schools, there is no effort in these movements to create leaders. However, there are a number of men and women whose voices have more power than others. They have named these people "referentes" which can be loosely translated as somebody to whom others look for references.

[lxxv] Matini's organization, the Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo (ERP), was dissolved during the 1976-1983 dictatorship. Flores left the MAS for reasons unknown to this researcher. Spagnoulo left the MTP shortly before a sector of this organization decided to take-over an army garrison (La Tablada) in 1989.

[lxxvi] The reference is here that no parent, in this leftist macho hegemonic masculinity conception, would cherish the idea of his child undergoing anal penetration (which indexes to a common notion in Latin American that links homosexuality with so called passive sexual practices).

[lxxvii] To be accurate, Perlongher left Política Obrera. As Política Obrera was black listed by the 1976-1983 dictatorship, the organization had to change its name to Partido Obrero to be able to participate in the 1983 elections.

[lxxviii] http://www.revistaenie.clarin.com/notas/2009/12/19/_-02103833.htm

[lxxix] http://asambleasciudadanas.org.ar/?q=aggregator

[lxxx] http://antorchas.org.ar/

[lxxxi] I suggest that neoliberalism's second stage can be characterized as a human mask, rather than a human face, because the issues that neoliberalism without a human face (the first stage) created, unemployment, poverty, exclusion, dispossession of national resources, etc., were not solved, but rather, disguised, especially unemployment. Far from generating genuine sources of income, the welfare plans merely allocated a small sum of money that, although helping to prevent starvation, were meant to keep these dispossessed masses quiet and out of the highways.

[lxxxii] In the Birth of Biopower (2008), Foucault distinguishes between disciplinary governmentality (mainly directed to create values and norms of behavior that the subject internalizes) and neoliberal governmentality, which aims at creating and avoiding behaviors through the offer of incentives. Foucault explains that these governmentalities are many times combined and deployed at the same time. I believe the Kirchner administration applied both models. The administration implemented disciplinary governmentality, with the assistance of the media and building on a longstanding racist tenet of the Argentine middle classes toward the working class, discourse was generated to portray unemployed workers as people who were avoiding work. At the same time, the administration implemented neoliberal governmentality by extending benefits and subsidies to unemployed workers who responded to the administration, while cutting off unemployed workers who continued to organize roadblockades once the economic situation improved in 2003.

[lxxxiii] Unemployed worker organizations continued to blockade roads for a long time, with more or less success, to protest against the cancellation of their welfare plans.

[lxxxiv] My own translation of my own interviews, 2005

[lxxxv] My own translation.

[lxxxvi] For more information on the Kirchner administration and the trigger-happy police, please visit http://www.correpi.lahaine.org.

[lxxxvii] The methodologies for struggle developed by these movements, extended beyond popular classes into conservative politics. In 2008, both big landowners and small middle class producers declared a lock-out, burned pasture fields, and blockaded roads to put pressure on the government to reduce taxes on agricultural exports, staging a re-grouping of conservative political forces that culminated with the "Kirchnerista" Frente para la Victoria's defeat, as they lost 29 seats in the present configuration of the National Congress.

[lxxxviii] Recovered factories receive state subsidies and, for the most part, operate within the capitalist market (Ruggeri 2005a)

[lxxxix] Heterarchies are social groupings where elements are not ranked or are ranked in different ways and do not necessarily reinforce hierarchical systems, but can support systems that tend to an egalitarian hegemony. The existence of heterarchies in a given group does not imply the absence of a hierarchy, nor does it exclude egalitarianism, since heterarchies can contribute to reinforce hierarchies, and subsume them (Ehrenreich 1995)) as in liberal democracies, where the three branches of power or heterarchies (executive, legislative and, judiciary) reinforce the hierarchical pyramid of state power.

[xc] In 2003, the MNER, originated in 2001, split into two different movements, the MNER and the Movimiento Nacional de Fábricas Recuperadas (MNFR), led by a conservative lawyer, Luis Caro. Today, there are several groups, all of them stemming from the original MNER, including the Federación de Cooperativas de Trabajo de la República Argentina (FECOOTRA), Federación Argentina de Cooperativas de Trabajadores Autogestionados (FACTA), and the Asociación Nacional de Trabajadores Autogestionados (ANTA) part of the CTA - Central de Trabajadores Argentinos.

[xci] The exceptions include industries where most workers are women, as in garment producing coops such as Brukman, Ceres, and CITA; the health care industry, as in Clínica Félix and Hospital Israelita; the food industry, as in Grissinópoli and Panadería la Argentina (Monteagudo 2009).

[xcii] In his book Contentious Lives (Auyero 2003), Javier Auyero argues that the "puebladas" of the 1990s were above all a quest for dignity and recognition, fueled by the economic hardships brought on by the structural adjustment.

[xciii] Naomi Klein talks about the shock produced by the structural adjustment measures and by capitalist crises in her book The Shock Doctrine (Klein 2007).

[xciv] "Ocupado" means busy. I keep the word in Spanish because it works well as the opposite of a "desocupado" (unemployed).

[xcv] All the quotes that follow from Vommaro's work (2003) are my own translation.

[xcvi] "Referente" is a term used by these movements instead of leader. It indexed to a person whom others listen to, but who has not formal leadership role.

[xcvii] To aide María in remembering her life experiences, I used photo elicitation techniques. I have collected numerous pictures taken by myself and by others of road blockades and PPs. As I showed María different images, her memories would come back to life.

[xcviii] These prefigutive MTDs have contributed to the empowerment of young women beyond motherhood. In the MTDs, young women are part of the PPs, sometimes even coordinating them, an activity that contributes to increase their prestige in the neighborhood, especially in times when unemployment and hunger were rampant in these areas.

[xcix]http://www.rimaweb.com.ar/biblio_legal/proyectos/aborto_despenalizacion.html, accessed March 29 2010

[c] María is part of an MTD that, after the Pueyrredón Bridge Massacre changed their power structure to allow for more centralization of decision-making processes. For that reason, I place María's MTD in a gray area of the field of politics by other means. I am not alluding here to the impact of the State on their organizing, as in Auyero's concept of the gray zone (Auyero 2007), but rather think of this gray area as the space where prefigurative, non-hierarchical social movements co-exist with more centralized organizations.

[ci] Randall Collins (2001) refers to this bonding as the result of "emotional energy", while Jeff Juris (2008) names these emotions "affective solidarity".

[cii] The role of emotions in bringing social movements together has been researched (see (Goodwin et al. 2001). The role of emotions linked to public protest has also been researched (see (Berezin 2001; Barker 2001; Collins 2001a; Juris 2008)

[ciii] For a discussion of the complex dynamics behind the popular assembly movement diminished capacity to organize, see (Adamovsky 2004) and (Triguboff 2008)

[civ] I will address the issue of natural extraction of resources and the social movements that oppose it in the next chapter.

[cv] In Deleuze's and Guattari's terms, the MTDs of the unemployed workers were struggling to reterritorialize their neighborhood.

[cvi] Along with the welfare/work subsidies, the social movements that received government these support also received important amounts of non-perishables, which were served at the soup kitchens to supplement the food from their organic gardens.

[cvii] By this she means that she is a better person. Although Argentine feminists are familiar with the notion that "woman" is socially constructed, there is also a popular conception that connects womanhood with resilience and other "earthly" positive qualities, although it also connects with less savory qualities, such as submission to the husband and parents, and other patriarchal values.

CHAPTER IV

WOMEN'S LIVES IN THE RHIZOME: BRIDGING THE PUBLIC AND THE PRIVATE

What we see is blossom, which passes. The rhizome remains.

(Prologue from "Memories, Dreams, Reflections")

Karl Jung (Jung 1963)

Introduction

In this chapter, I focus on women's lives and the changes they experienced upon entering and constituting the field of politics by other means. Following the different non-hierarchical connections established by these movements with each other, I use the metaphor of the rhizome (Deleuze and Guattari 2008a) to illustrate the horizontal connections, stratifications, and segmentations of social movements in this field. The field of politics by other means comprises different struggles against neoliberalism, which explains its diversity. Their constituency organizes around multiple factors including unemployment, poverty, homelessness, cultural politics (especially concerning sexual exploitation and diversity), as well as struggles against the polluting and dispossessing multinational corporations that exploit Argentina's natural resources. Although they all share in a rejection of neoliberalism, what distinguishes them from other organizations that also oppose this political, economic and cultural construction are five characteristics that they all share in to a different extent: first, a demand for autonomy from the State, political parties, unions, and churches; second, a tendency toward direct actions; third, non-hierarchical structures of power; fourth, prefigurative

aspects, which include performances of radical, non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities, and, fifth, a strong concern for their own territory[cviii].

Radical, non-hegemonizing performances of political femininities and masculinities, though present in all of the movements within the field of politics by other means, represent an ideal type of communication and construction of power. While several movements achieve performances of gender balance, with women who have the opportunity to access leadership roles through community building, others do not achieve this. Radical in their direct actions, and some also in their general conception of politics, in some of these movements it is evident that men have more prestigious roles than women. In movements like the Asamblea Ciudadana Ambiental of Gualeguaychú (ACAG) or Movimiento de Trabajadores Desempleados Castillo (MTD Castillo), there is a predominance of performances of leftist macho hegemonic masculinities and femininities with different outcomes, one of them being that it is always men who address the media and meet with government officials, while women become relegated to secondary, more domestic, roles. If we think of the power performances of the leftist Argentine scene as an spectrum of performances of power, on one side of the spectrum we would find performances of radical, non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities, while on the opposite side, we would find performances of embodied in leftist macho hegemonic political femininities and masculinities.

Movements that are able to contest the role of gender within their own spaces are not surprisingly movements were feminist discourses are positively regarded, as in the case of La Olla. On the other hand, movements such as the ACAG ostensibly reject feminism. Compared to La Olla, and within the field of politics by other means, the

ACAG would be on the opposite end of the spectrum of performances of political femininities and masculinities. As we will see, the ACAG bears the direct influence of the Catholic Church, at the same time that members of the local conservative Sociedad Rural actively participate in the ACAG[cix].

These radical, non-hegemonizing performances reflect on the power structure of the organizations. While leftist centralized political parties allow for its leadership to become insulated from its grassroots through sedimentation of power in the Central Committee, organizations within the field of politics by other means, on the contrary, have egalitarian structures that allow for critiques of power performances by its members. I distinguish radical, non-hegemonizing performances of political femininities and masculinities from performances by leftist political parties that aim to create a new hegemony, which they would achieve through practices of power-over (Holloway 2002), a power built on domination. "Power-over" is a construction of power characterized by physical and verbal aggressions against compañerxs within and outside of their own organizations, a tendency to talk over everybody else in meetings, a focus on "snatching" activists from other organizations, a tendency to hegemonize public spaces, and the concomitant sectarianism that inhibits these organizations from working together toward a common goal. "Power-with" (Ferguson 2009)[cx], on the other hand, is not aimed at dominating discourse and practices, but rather to open spaces for a diversity of "truths" to emerge —an exercise of power with an emphasis on building community to organize together against relations of subordination and oppression (Allen 1999). I recognize the radical aspects of both performances of power, as they are both oriented to a deep social change of structures of domination. However, I distinguish one from the other in that one

is aimed at producing that change through discursive and non-discursive violence while the aim of the radical, non-hegemonizing political performances of femininities and masculinities characterizes attempts at social change through peaceful community building[cxi].

Performances of radical non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities are part of the horizontal, rhizomatic flow that crosses a space characterized by a diversity of political stances, contention and negotiation, both of gender roles, and of tactic and strategies to struggle against neoliberal strategies. On the contrary, social movements within the field of politics by other means perform radical, non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities that prominently include a search for consensus and dialogue to reach social change, fueled by the aim of creating power, rather than diminishing the power of other organizations. An important part of their commitment to creating power was to engage in gender democracy, so as to not oppress women in their organizations. Allowing for women's leadership was an important break from the "leftist macho" leaders of the past. In this way, these social movements can work together through egalitarian, horizontal rhizomatic connections that allow them to spread throughout society in their struggle for social change.

While it is clear that social movements within this field are concerned with creating popular power, in the sense that they are not trying to take power away from other popular organizations, Ann Ferguson (private communication) asked where this power comes from. Is it based on energies diverted from wage work, family and sexual coupling, and national citizenship identifications? Or are these energies rather created from the synergy generated by the multiplicity of affective interactions derived from the

contact with social actors outside of activists' family lives, as well as from the production of life through an economy of solidarity? The answer to this question is complex. I think that the energies that are engaged in the creation of popular power might stem from different origins, since these movements are diverse, spanning different social classes. Although many of the older activists, especially those with past militancy, have articulated critiques of traditional families in their connection with state building and patriarchy, most of the constituency of the field still devotes much energy to creating or maintaining their own nuclear families. However, in many cases women were able to diminish their domestic "third shift", by re-articulating their family lives recruiting help from their male partners, children, or other family members. In this way, they were able to liberate some of the energy employed in the reproduction of their families' lives, re-territorializing it into movement activities. Wage work, on the other hand, has been the object of a more systematic critique within the movement, a discussion that was spearheaded by unemployment. Thus, it is not surprising that much of the energy of movements within this field (especially the popular assembly spin-offs and unemployed worker organizations) came from diverting energy from wage work to their own solidarity economy projects, the "proyectos productivos" (egalitarian microenterprises described in Chapter III).

Although claims of autonomy from the State are common in all of the movements within the field of politics by other means (US based anti-corporate globalization movement, Zapatistas, and some of the Argentine social movements), only in the specific case of the Zapatistas in Chiapas is it clear that they have channeled energy that would otherwise had been employed in the reaffirmation of national citizenship processes. They

channeled these energies, instead, into the construction of an indigenous, diverse, and autonomous socio-political space.

In Argentina, on the other hand, several women I interviewed explained that their activism was resisted by their non-activist partners, partially because these women were at times unavailable for sex, given that they were not in a mood for intimacy after long meetings, roadblocks, or other movement activities. But these same women explained that they were not available for sex and affection because their partners were not supportive of their activism, an attitude that made these women feel alienated from them.

Although some energies were diverted from other spaces, in my view, what explains the deep changes in the subjectivities of those involved in these movements was an increase in the affective energy of the group as a whole, which allowed women to create power within their neighborhoods, re-territorializing in this way what was a deprecated space, previously only meant to reproduce life, but now the site of disputes over the meaning of unemployment, poverty, and even family life. During the seventies, factories were important spaces for activism, as different political organizations focused on organizing the proletariat. However, during the nineties, unemployment forced many of these workers to remain in their "barrios". This permanence of the working class in the "barrio" caused an important change in a territory that had been previously conceived by leftist political parties mostly as workers' sleeping quarters. With unemployment, the "barrio" became the site of a number of policies and activism, stemming both from State initiatives and from a diverse range of activists. While the State operated mainly through the "punteros", the state brokers that distributed welfare plans, popular organizations, especially those movements referred to as Movimientos de Trabajadores Desempleados

(MTDs), geared their efforts toward creating a number of social and political networks that, focusing on the "barrio", were aimed at strengthening community bonds in the face of the multiple social issues brought on by poverty, exclusion, and dispossession. In this way, the "barrio" became the territory where unemployment was decoded in an empowering way, as the MTDs were able to re-signify what it meant to be unemployed by discussing the dispossessing nature of neoliberal biopower[cxii]. Indeed, the "barrio" can be construed as having undergone a process of re-territorialization (Deleuze 2008b), as an alternative power construction competed for territory with a neoliberal biopower, that had previously held a monopoly of meanings and resources over the "barrio", embodied in the "punteros."

Structured through the radical principle of justice (Ferguson 2008) "to each according to need, from each according to abilities, and characterized by performances of power-with, this alternative power construction harnesses discursive and non-discursive energies through an emphasis in the politics of affection. Indeed, this alternative power construction presents characteristics associated with certain feminisms, such as an economy of solidarity, based on principles that are "congruent with essential [socialist, radical, anarchist] feminist goals (Matthaei 2009). Care, an interest in the human being per se, and not just in relation to what this human can provide to the organization, as well as discipline that comes from within the community are common expressions of the politics of affection that permeate these constructions.

The affect that permeate their exchanges facilitated the analysis of meanings, particularly in explaining the structural nature of unemployment, as their analysis included, as well, discussions on how to protest because "normal" channels for dissent,

under neoliberalism, proved to be ineffective. As a result of these discussions, these movements are strongly oriented toward direct action. Further talks on the negative role of vanguardism in the seventies, their critique of the Soviet Union and democratically centralized political parties contributed to explain their prefigurative aspects.

Meeting with other women in their own neighborhoods, with middle class, feminist women (both through alliances with popular assemblies, and through the "Encuentro Nacional de Mujeres"), with local and international activists and academics generated a surge of energy that was not there before, which allowed for important changes in the lives of the women involved[cxiii]. These changes were noted, analyzed and disseminated by academics and activists, producing an important amount of literature, which includes this dissertation, both locally and internationally. In this way, these movements also generated discursive power, as the global interest that their organizing generated spread a message of hope throughout social movements worldwide.

As part of my analysis of performances of radical, non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities, I will address the gender and power structures of this field, as I problematize the different strategies used by men and women in the meetings of these movements. I will use examples of performances of power that I observed in movements such as the Union de Asamableas Ciudadanas Regional Capital (UAC RC), La Mesa, Multitudes, and La Olla, to contrast power performances of movements that exhibit all characteristics of the field of politics by other means, with movements that I place in the margins, in the gray area of these field, as in the ACAG and some of the movements within the Frente Darío Santillán and the former Coordinadora Aníbal Verón[cxiv]. Also, by comparing La Olla with the ACAG, I can assess the extent of the

influence of feminism over these movements, as La Olla acknowledges feminist influences, while the ACAG is, for the most part, blatantly opposed to feminism. This comparison allows me to analyze how feminism influences the power performances of these movements, which, although within the same field, present diverse power constructions.

The power structures of these movements allow them to build connections throughout this field, as they share spaces and efforts to empower and educate their constituencies throughout the rhizome of egalitarian flows that connect each other. However, gender hegemonies (Ortner 1996) become clear as women talk less than men in private meetings, and seldom address the press, while the organizations rely heavily on their leadership and organizational work. Women, who are for the most part conscious of these issues, in some cases chose to silence their own ideas to avoid conflicts and to ensure shorter meetings. In other cases, they strategically avoid raising issues of gender as they privilege disseminating what they unavoidably term "more important matters" — the ecological or socioeconomic problems that brought them together (Fournier and Laudano 2002; Rifkin 2008).

This chapter is also concerned with the performances of gender in the "escraches" and road blockades. I analyze how gender is made in these direct actions. Charged with most of the domestic aspects of the actions, inevitably these courageous women point to men when the press arrives, so that is always men who talk about the issues that brought them together —unwittingly reproducing society's traditional division of labor, with women in charge of the domestic and men in charge of the public[cxv].

In this chapter, I also assess the gender of repression, through a problematization of the roles of policewomen and piqueteras in the escraches and road blockades before and after the repression of the Pueyrredón Bridge in 2002. What became known as the Massacre of Avellaneda (the Massacre from now on) was a police repression of a CAV road blockade[cxvi], during which hundreds of piqueteros were injured, and two of them killed. I document how, after the repression, unemployed workers changed their tactics to suggest that they were families in need and not terrorists, by placing only women and children at the front of their "escraches" and road blockades.

In order to map the rhizomatic connections of the field of politics by other means, I will use two examples. I will first address the connections that led to a public event organized by one of these movements, La Olla[cxvii], and second, I will analyze the connections of the ACAG. La Olla is a spinoff of the popular assembly movement. Their members, between ten and twelve people, meet weekly to organize a soup kitchen and an open mike once a month, with the objective to raise awareness on a number of social issues connected with neoliberalism. The ACAG, on the other hand, is a massive organization of citizens of the town of Gualeguaychú in the province of Entre Ríos, opposed to the installation of pulp mills on the Uruguayan shore of the Uruguay River. I chose the first example because La Olla is one of the movements within the field of politics by other means that, although small in numbers, exhibits all five characteristics of this field: a demand for autonomy, an orientation toward direct action, a concern for their own territory, a concern for gender balance, and prefigurative aspects that include performances of radical, non hegemonic political femininities and masculinities, as well as the capacity to build power with other similarly oriented movements. On the other

hand, I chose the example of the ACAG, because within the field of politics by other means they are almost on the opposite side of the spectrum as far as prefigurative aspects are involved. However, although the ACAG's prefigurative aspects are weaker than in La Olla, it constitutes the most massive movement within this field as an important numbers of people organize around this international conflict involving not only Gualeguaychú in Argentina, but also the federal Argentine government and Uruguay. Both governments brought the issue to The Hague tribunal as a result of the ACAG's permanent block of the international bridge.

The first three characteristics of the field of politics by other means are strongly present in the ACAG: direct action, a concern for its own territory and a demand for autonomy, while prefigurative aspects (excluding their vision of a clean environment[cxviii]) are weak. Although they have developed a strong capacity to build rhizomatic power connections with other organizations, especially through their participation in the UAC, their organizing does not take into account issues of gender balance and their public persona is always embodied in men. My interest in contrasting the political performances of these two movements lies in the fact that while La Olla members claim that their organizing strategies stem out of their commitment to horizontalism[cxix], which the ACAG also embraces, members of La Olla have been exposed to, and "contaminated" by feminist theory (Monteagudo and Prieto 2010a), while many members of the ACAG (both men and women) hold an anti-feminist discourse. These examples allow me to contrast a space that is permeable to feminist influences, La Olla, with one where feminist discourse is at least partially blocked, as in the ACAG, to assess the influence of feminism in the performances of radical non-hegemonizing political femininities and

masculinities within this field. Given that both the ACAG and La Olla are committed to horizontal politics, contrasting one movement's commitment with gender balance to the other, allows me to gauge the importance of how the sidestreaming (Alvarez 2009)[cxx], and the mainstreaming of feminism impact gender constructions within social movements. While most movement participants have been exposed to the mainstreaming of feminism through the inclusion of women in government, the sidestreaming of feminist ideas and practices, the horizontal flow of feminism from one movement to another, has been uneven in this field. As the literature points to lack of internal democracy in the movements of the seventies (Stahler-Sholk et al. 2008), it is important to analyze how much progress these movements have made in their quest for internal democracy, and to what extent feminism can be credited with that move, either through sidestreaming or through the mainstreaming of feminism through government quotas, universities, and in other mainstream spaces[cxxi].

As part of my assessment, I will address the ACAG's political performances by focusing on the lack of public women's voices, and the use of the female body to advance their cause. But I will first describe the nature of the conflict that brought the ACAG together, and will then proceed to map out the numerous networks, social movements and organizations that constitute the ACAG to exemplify how even limited performances of radical non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities informed by non-hierarchical constructions can contribute to create social movement power, as they connect rhizomatically, in non-coopting ways with other movements and organizations.

Global Exterminating Technologies

The Uruguay River flows lazily along the shores of Argentina and Uruguay, watering a generous brown and green landscape of soft hills that roll for miles on end. Upstream, the river comes to life in the Brazilian rainforest, where it is born at 5900 feet above the sea. Downstream, its magnificent flow runs almost at ground level into the Atlantic. The river, after jumping high cliffs in Brazil, settles between Uruguay and Argentina, as it constitutes the legal border that, until recently, separated these two countries — countries that it used to unite. No one could blame the sandy, slow river for this past separation. If anything, it seems that the blame would lie in the global and local (glocal) economic, political, cultural and social powers that clashed in the region to create a new configuration of biopolitics in the Southern Cone.

These new configurations are addressed by thinkers such as Aihwa Ong (2006), James Ferguson (2007), and Saskia Sassen (1998) who highlight, from different angles, the uneven ways in which neoliberal practices span the globe. Ong explains that neoliberalism has engendered spaces of exception or "latitudes —that coordinate different axes of labor regulation and of labor disciplining" (Ong 2006), that is, enclaves where labor is extracted in ethnicized ways. On a similar vein, James Ferguson argues that neoliberalism, although spanning the planet, does not cover it uniformly, but rather, hops from place to place. Sassen, on the other hand, concludes that there are global cities (New York, Hong Kong, London, and Sao Paulo) that unlike cities of pre-neoliberal capitalism which were contained within national boundaries, "connect remote points of production, consumption, and finance" (Sassen 1998:xii) by concentrating management and finances. Sassen's analysis allows us to see global inequalities in localized spaces, as in the case of the brutally poor US inner cities versus the ultra-wealthy metropolitan

urban centers where finance and management of the world economy take place. These same inequalities in what would have been conceived in the past as nationally bounded territories are also evident in Uruguay, where not too far from impoverished Fray Bentos, blooms an international wealthy vacation spot in opulent Punta del Este. A few hours away from "Punta", the Fraybentinos could see no option out of their poverty but to allow a notoriously polluting industry to settle on their shores in exchange for short-term construction work in a context of high unemployment in the area.

Polluting industries, such as the pulp mills, are moved to the global south, where global north racist views of the population allow for the southern environment to be destroyed, while taking advantage of the high levels of unemployment and popular investment in education of some of the countries in the area. In these authors' vision neoliberalism is not a homogenous system, but rather mobile and shifting discursive and non-discursive technologies, responsible for the destruction of many lives and local economic systems. Technologies that are also responsible, in my view, for fostering the birth, as unintended consequences, of untamed social movements that produce creative responses to the threats and opportunities that the friction (Tsing 2005) between the local and the global generate as they impact their lives.

The untamed streak of these social movements contrasts with the rational, transparent dialogues that Jürgen Habermas (1962) demands of the public spheres. However, his notion of the publics has been critiqued, especially by feminist authors, such as Iris Young (1987), who elaborated on a critique of this Habermasian notion of a rational public sphere, to conclude that his conception of the public is abstract, depleted of the embodied and gendered components that actually constitute the public sphere.

Nancy Fraser's critique of Habermas, on the other hand, although complimentary to Young's, focuses on what she considers is an idealized notion of the public spheres, which she understand as built on exclusions, particularly of women (Fraser 1993:5). As Gardiner (2004) notes, Habermas' idealized public sphere, with its emphasis on rational, open dialogues does not take into account the subaltern publics, or social movements, that are oppressed within society and thus, engage in communication that does not fit seamlessly with the Habermasian ideal of a pure communication. Instead, these subaltern publics, these social movements, engage in Argentina in a variety of untamed actions because when they do not, they do not count. As we have seen, the State, the institutions of democracy, political parties and unions suffered a huge loss of prestige under neoliberalism. As many people in Argentine social movements explained, before they engaged in direct actions, they had tried out many other ways to make themselves heard, to no avail.

This was certainly the case with the citizens of the Argentinean town of Gualeguaychú, who tried to engage the Argentine government's attention, seeking protection in different ways. Concerned about the pollution potential of the pulp mill industry, when all prescribed manners for engaging the federal government's attention failed, folks from Gualeguaychú created a massive popular assembly movement, to protest the Finnish pulp mill installed on Uruguay land, right across from their shores, the ACAG.

Uruguay, a small country that underwent a serious economic crisis during the nineties, planned for the installation of several multinational pulp mills on the shores of the Uruguay River, across the border from Gualeguaychú, Argentina. Alarmed by the

knowledge of the serious environmental risks posed by this kind of industry, and after unsuccessfully petitioning both Uruguay and Argentinean governments, in the year 2005 the citizens of this town decided to blockade the international bridge that connects Gualeguaychú with Uruguay. Their action generated an international conflict involving Argentina and Uruguay. The bridge was blockaded on and off for several years, and has been permanently blockaded for the past three years[cxxii], seriously impacting the relationship between these two countries, as well as the livelihood of citizens in both towns.

Beyond the Blooming Cycles of Protests: The Submerged Connections

Day lilies have been keeping me company since I moved to Vermont, where I found them growing abundantly in my own yard. In our very short summer, lilies are highly valued for their resilience to hard winters, capacity to spread abundantly, and bloom quickly and emphatically. Little did I know that these lilies held under the earth the secret that would help me understand the complexities of the publics of Gualeguaychú.

Lilies do not have one single root, but rather a multiplicity of underground resources. The rhizome is a tuberous formation, and differs from roots in a number of important ways, the main one being that if cut, a rhizome can easily reproduce itself. The rhizome is stratified, and territorialized. At the same time, the rhizome can skip its territory, sometimes by segmenting, to grow into a new territory. Although the bloom might look dead, the rhizome is alive and working on spreading itself through a process known as decalcomania (Deleuze and Guattari 2008a), the capacity to respond to the environment by adapting in its own ways which do not need to reflect or follow the

hierarchical structures that surround it. Deleuze and Guattari build on Karl Jung to theorize on the main characteristics of the rhizome, which they defined as connectivity, heterogeneity, multiplicity and decalcomania. As we will see, the movement of Gualeguaychú presents many of these characteristics.

The diversity of the rhizome, as it constitutes different nodes of resistance and power, allows for people to give different meanings to their participation in the ACAG. Building on Alberto Melucci's concept of submerged networks of resistance (Melucci 1989) and the connection between everyday lives and collective action, this dissertation engages the space where personal biographies intersect with the public spheres. Melucci describes submerged networks of resistance as spaces where meanings are made and information circulates. These networks are constituted at the intersection of everyday life, and according to Javier Auyero (2003), collective insurrectionary practices can be at least in part explained by the biographies of the actors of these movements. Although most scholarship concentrates in the moments of visibility of these networks, when movements protest or make appearances in the public spaces, it is in the everyday life of people that meanings are made. Auyero (2003) proposes that what explains contentious collective action is not just the structural factors that no doubt are at the "root of (…) contentious episodes" but rather "how protesters *live* the event" (Auyero 2003) (italics in original).

Indeed, while for those connected with the Federación Agraria Argentina (FAA from now on) this might be just a socio-economic conflict, for the Ejército Alpargatista it is a struggle for life and for the environment (Giarraca 2007). Similarly, and to judge from the posters that hang on the walls of the protestors' shed at the road blockade, as

well as from my interviews, the schoolteachers and children that made those posters participate to preserve the life, the beauty and the recreational potential of the Uruguay River. The schools' participation stem from the fact that early on, at the onset of the conflict, members of the ACAG reached out to elementary and high schools. As schools constitute spaces that can be re-territorialized by social movements who struggle with the State over the scope and content of the curriculum, the strategy of disputing meanings attributed to neoliberal situations of oppression and dispossession, are also used by different recovered factories in Argentina, but most prominently by Zanón (my own ethnographic notes), a recovered ceramics factory in the South of Argentina. The workers of Zanón not only visit the schools and talk regularly with students and teachers, but have also donated tiles to the local schools, and have supported, in several occasions, teacher's strikes. The teacher's union, on the other hand, has declared strikes in solidarity with Zanón, a necessary and very effective action since the factory has faced several eviction procedures, all of which have been defeated because of the massive popular support they enjoy in their own territory and among leftist networks in Argentina in general. It is clear for the population that surrounds the ceramics factory in the small town of Centenario, near Neuquén, that if the factory —with 400 coop members— closes, in all likelihood, the town will become yet another ghost town in the impoverished Argentine south. Here again we see how a concern for territory, networks and alliances constitute the core of the contemporary social movements in Argentina, linked by the numerous rhizomes of struggle for survival through progressive change.

As in all rhizomes, the population that participates in the struggle against the paper mills is distributed in different social classes, or stratifications. My research

suggests that, although predominantly middle class, due both to the nature of the conflict (pollution that can affect everybody), and the openness of their movement, this movement has been able to gather support across classes. This is a characteristic that Gualeguaychú shares with the other contemporary environmental/social movements of Argentina (Svampa 2008). We see here a capacity for connectivity, as well as heterogeneity: the movement has been able to, if not unite, at least allow for the full participation of groups and individuals who might otherwise remain separate. The movement congregates dissimilar and many times antagonistic political parties, both from the left and the center, as well as progressive NGOs, and radical ecologists, as the Ejército Alpargatista of Entre Ríos, and popular assemblies from Buenos Aires, academics and students, as well as the Catholic Church.

The movement was able to engage the local and federal government, the latter only after they moved to blockade the international San Martín Bridge. While the local government simply responded to this massive mobilization, the federal government finally showed support because Gualeguaychú is envisioned as productive territory, since they are an important middle class tourist resort, and prominent exporters of soy and other agricultural products. This would explain why the government was willing to mildly support them in their struggle against the pulp mills. Moreover, their motivation might have also responded to the fact that the Argentines were making no money from the pulp mills in Uruguayan land, and much tax revenue would be lost if Gualeguaychú's economy went down.

Although their gender power structure indexes to male dominated processes, the ACAG's commitment to non-hierarchical constructions of power with other movements

has enabled them to reach out of their own territory, by establishing rhizomatic connections with movements far away Gualeguaychú. The ACAG has been active, intermittently, not only in the international arenas, such as the Vienna Summit, but more often in the City of Buenos Aires, four hours away from Gualeguaychú. This ability of the ACAG to mobilize beyond their own territory indexes to its rhizomatic structure, a characteristic shared by many of the counter publics active in the arena of politics by other means. The networks that constitute the ACAG include the local chapter of the Catholic Church, school teachers, elementary and high school students, the local University, the local chapter of the Madres de Plaza de Mayo, several political parties, including the Union Cívica Radical, the Partido Justicialista (Peronists), conservative organizations, as in the local chapter of the Sociedad Rural, groups like the FAA that represent small and medium size producers, powerful Maoist unemployed worker organizations, such as the CCC that supports the FAA, and NGOS and activists networks, such as the Ejército Alpargatista, with its unique blend of music, "Carnaval", aesthetics, and protest. The networks that participate and support Gualeguaychú's struggle against the paper mills also include members of the Lista Violeta, that coordinates the teachers' union at the Facultad de Filosofía y Letras of the Universidad de Buenos Aires, as well as other academics from the Universidad de Buenos Aires and the Universidad Nacional General San Martín, and most prominently, several different popular Assemblies, including the Asamblea de San Telmo in Buenos Aires. These pre-existing networks constitute a condition for mobilization to occur (Melucci 1996:291), as they effectively "made" the ACAG through their participation in the meetings, outreach to their members to participate in mobilizations, material support to travel abroad to learn from the

environmental predicament of other pulp mill-towns, while deploying different analysis that, after much discussion during, before and after the formal meetings, came to embody the ACAG's public discourse.

The movement's capacity for connectivity, to congregate heterogeneous groupings, as described above, coupled with their ability to re-territorialize, allowed them to spread their influence and actions into other geographic and political spaces. In the summer of 2007, members of the ACAG, with the support of leftist political parties and popular assemblies from Buenos Aires, set up first two plastic pools in front of the Finnish Embassy, one with clean water and the other one with dirty water, in allusion to what would happen to the Uruguay River if the pulp mills pollute the waters. Later on, they boiled cabbages in huge pots in front of the Embassy, as a material/aesthetic reminder of what the town of Gualeguaychú smells like when the wind blows their way the gas emissions of the pulp mill.

On several occasions, members of the ACAG traveled to Buenos Aires in an attempt to blockade the "upper class" path to Uruguay, "Buquebus", a fancy ferry that crosses the immense Río de la Plata to connect the capital city of Argentina with different cities and beaches in Uruguay. Although the government had been mildly supportive of their struggle, it was made clear to the "asambleístas" (member of the Asamblea) that any attempt to stop the flow of upper and middle class tourists to Uruguay would be repressed. And it was. Gualeguaychú was shocked when the TV screens showed the bloodied face of Alfredo De Angelis, a leader of the local small and medium agricultural producers, the president of the local chapter of the FAA, and a trusted founding member of the ACAG, as he was beat up and arrested by the Navy police that supervises the port.

In a matter of hours, thousands of people blockaded Route 14 in Gualeguaychú, the Mercosur highway, until De Angelis was freed[cxxiii].

Rhizomes have different points of entrance. Given that a rhizome is the opposite of a hierarchical formation, people can be part of rhizome-structured movements by determining for themselves, and by negotiating with the other participants, their own levels of participation, responsibilities, and leadership. This openness in the structure has allowed a diverse range of organizations and people, including different political parties, NGOs, and popular assemblies, to be able to participate in and, in fact, constitute the ACAG. Moreover, the ACAG has also extended into the less explicit political networks, alluded to by Robert Putnam (Putnam et al. 1993). In 2005, the ACAG's goals were prominently displayed in the "Carnaval of Gualeguaychú", a touristy event based on the objectification of women's bodies (and a few metrosexual men), yet constituted by a popular network of performers, costume designers, and dancers. Their participation in the "Carnaval" culminated in 2006, when Evangelina Carrozzo, the queen of the "Carnaval" of Gualeguaychú, supported by Greenpeace activists, "crashed" the Vienna Summit[cxxiv]. Barely covered, she held up a sign that read "No to the Paper Mills" in front of 60 Presidents from all over the world. What could be decoded by US feminists as a blatant exploitation of the female body[cxxv], was well received locally and granted unheard of international publicity to the Gualeguaychú cause.

Networks of Resistance

The metaphor of the rhizome allows me to envision the connections between social movements and other horizontal civic networks, such as the "Carnaval", important in the struggle against the paper mill. The "Carnaval" network not only provided the

body of the queen who stripped at the Vienna Summit of Presidents, but also provided a platform for the ACAG to display a number of props during several iterations of the festivities. The ACAG participation in the "Carnaval" was important because people from all over the state and the country come to watch the dancers. Thus, the ACAG was able to extend their influence through participation in this popular festivity.

Robert Putnam (1993:173-175) asserts that horizontal networks of civic engagement play an important role in civil society. The networks he looks at include such mundane groups as choirs and soccer teams, and have a strong impact in the development of democratic civic virtues**cxxvi**. Melucci (1996) takes Putnam a step further, and affirms that networks are indispensable for the development of solidarity, circulation of information and communication. In fact, networks constitute social movements, as "movements in complex societies are hidden networks of groups, meeting points, and circuits of solidarity" (Melucci 1996). Mario Diani (Diani and Eyerman 1992) following Melucci, defines social movements as networks "of informal interaction, between a plurality of individuals, groups or associations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity" (Diani and Eyerman 1992:13). This somewhat abstract definition of networks, is concretized by Alvarez who includes civil society, NGOs, Churches, the State, political parties, and universities (Alvarez et al. 1998). This is precisely the case in Gualeguaychú, where the networks that constitute the ACAG include, as mentioned above, a wide arrange of organizations, including the Catholic Church, NGOs, political parties, school and local and national Universities. These vast array of organizations (Osa 2003), social groups (Tilly and Wood 2003) and local communities (Broadbent 2003) that go beyond popular

organizations and hold ties to local elites (Broadbent 2003) as in the case of the SR —the ultraconservative association of big landowners, contributes to explain the broad reach of the ACAG, and its capacity to massively mobilize the relatively small population of this rural town.

Que no se Abolle la Olla, que no se Calle la Calle[cxxvii]

Although many activists connected with the popular assembly movement of 2002-03 are either submerged (Melucci 1989), or are part of more centralized organizations (my interviews), as the ACAG, proves, the popular Asambleas' way of doing politics (non-hierarchically organized and oriented toward direct action) is still important in Argentina's public spheres. Moreover, spinoff groups such as La Olla are active in influencing Argentina's cultural politics (Alvarez et al. 1998) within the field of politics by other means. Once a month, members of La Olla interrupt the constant flow of cars to set up an "olla popular" (soup kitchen) in the middle of a passageway adjacent to the busy Corrientes and Angel Gallardo intersection. As they are quick to note, the "olla popular" is not meant to assist those who might not be in a position to feed themselves regularly, but rather, as one of the organizers explained to me, it is used as "an excuse to get together and talk about important things" (interview). The talking is public and gathers attention from those who walk by as they use a microphone, which, after some introductions and initial statements and questions, is open to anybody who wants to express something connected with their monthly theme. The themes chosen by this collective are meant to denaturalize glocal[cxxviii] cultural, political and social processes of exclusion, marginalization, and oppression that subjects are implicated in through their connection with the State and neoliberal capitalism. Environmental, gender, sexual

diversity, mental health, poverty, unemployment and housing issues[cxxix], are analyzed connecting what happens in their own territory with global neoliberal practices and policies that, intersecting with the local State and elites affect the population of their territory in negative ways.

La Olla has a strong concern for their own territory, an interest that manifests itself in different ways, but particularly in connection with housing issues. In the past, La Olla produced, for example, a mapping of the housing deficit in their own neighborhood as they organized an Olla on homelessness, a crucial problem in the city of Buenos Aires, as impoverished workers and lower middle class people cannot afford to rent their own spaces, with at least 15,000 people living in "situación de calle"[cxxx]. The Olla not only raised awareness on this through their open mike and related activities, but also actively participated in a direct action against the government of the city, in coordination with several other organizations.

As the above example shows, both their themes and how they organize to address them present strong prefigurative characteristics because their aim is to generate practices and discourse that foster, in the here and now, the embodiment of the desired changes under neoliberal capitalism, rather than preparing for a revolution that will solve these problems in the future. In this same vein, La Olla de Masculinidades (masculinities) addressed the issue of prostitution and "trata[cxxxi]" through their traditional open mike, designing a street intervention with "La Casa del Encuentro[cxxxii]", a feminist grassroots NGO devoted to stopping the exploitation of women by raising consciousness on the role of the consumer of prostitution, rather than penalizing the woman who prostitutes herself. With a similar aim, they also invited VXE, an organization of feminist men who work to

change male dominated cultural processes through raising men's awareness of their gender privileges.

La Olla's capacity to work with La Casa del Encuentro and VXE also alludes to another aspect of their engagement with prefigurative politics, as it points to their capacity to create power with different organizations. This creation of power through non-hierarchical practices, designed so as not to oppress or otherwise exploit organizations and movements that work with them, constitutes as well a good example of performances of radical non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities that are opposed to the constructions of "power-over" which characterize the actions of many of the centralized leftist political parties of Argentina. My longstanding observation of these centralized political parties would provide many examples of how the logic of power-over works, but I will instead chose a more contemporary case study to show the consequences of power-over driven organizing with an example of the popular assembly movement, documented by Matías Triguboff (2008) and narrated to me by several of my interviewees.

The popular assembly movement, along with the piqueteros and recovered factories, was one of the most important expressions of politics by other means. Emerging in the year 2001, this middle-class movement organized non-hierarchically to confront the social and economic crisis that was raking the country. The Interbarrial (inter-neighborhood) was an effort of the popular assembly movement to coordinate the actions of the approximately 122 assemblies of Buenos Aires (Triguboff 2008) during the years 2002 and 2003. The Interbarrial organized the Friday "cacerolazos" that followed the 2001 insurrection throughout the first months of 2002. Although constituted for the

most part by autonomists and activists without partisan membership, the Interbarrial soon became the site of ferocious struggles by different Trotskyist parties that tried, at least in the case of the Partido Obrero (PO), to turn the popular assembly movement into a support group for the unemployed workers, especially the Polo Obrero, which they created. As they characterized the popular assemblies as a middle class movement, they were eager to have this movement submit to the dictates of the proletariat (even if this proletariat was unemployed[cxxxiii]) following Lenin's well-known formula that characterizes the proletariat as the vanguard of the revolution to which the middle classes should submit. However, the pretention to control not only the unemployed workers, but also the employed workers, the workers of the recovered factories, and the Interbarrial was shared by other Trotskyist parties such as the MST and the PTS. Consequently, the Interbarrial soon became the site of bitter disputes over whose unemployed worker organizations should these so called middle class movements follow.

The discussions and disputes between these three Trotskyist parties soon turn the Interbarrial into an organizing nightmare, where ego, power driven, violent performances of political masculinities made intelligent decision-making impossible. Finally, when trying to decide where the popular assembly movement would gather on May 1st to commemorate Workers Day, on April 21, 2002, members of the PO and the MST engaged in a violent argument that ended in a generalized fist-fight. As a consequence, the Interbarrial could not decide where the assemblies should gather on May 1st. Different assemblies attended different May 1st. acts, while some of them flatly refused to attend any and organized de-centralized activities in their own neighborhood.

Contrasting with these performances of leftist macho hegemonic political masculinity, the activities of La Olla, when they get together to take over the public space once a month, part with centralized political parties' power performances in that La Olla's activities are always coordinated with other organizations, as La Olla opens their territory to similarly oriented organizations.

The Olla on Masculinities was geared toward de-naturalizing the local, historically (HIll Collins 1999) and culturally specific (Gonzalez 1996) version of what R.W. Connell termed hegemonic masculinity (Connell 1987a). As mentioned before, La Olla invited a feminist organization that struggles against the "redes de trata", La Casa, and another social movement organized by feminist men, VXE[cxxxiv] . Following their method of meeting weekly to define the questions that would be posed to the general public and attendants to La Olla, as well as coordinate the different activities that accompany the open mike[cxxxv], La Olla shares their space in a non-hierarchical, non-cooptive manner. The aim of these joint actions is not to increase La Olla's power, as they are not oriented toward building up their own organization to eventually take over the state. Rather, their manifested aim is that of clarifying the power relations that under neoliberalism implicate human beings in different power relations to create consciousness among the general population to change these relations of domination, whether they are based on gender privileges (as in the Olla on Masculinities), discrimination, (Olla on Sexual Diversity, Olla on Women, and Olla on Mental Health) exclusions (Olla on Homelessness) or dispossession and environmental off-sourcing[cxxxvi] (as in an Olla organized against the multinational exploitation of mineral resources).

Another characteristic of La Olla that sets them apart from traditional leftist parties political performances is that La Olla's activists participate freely in other social movements, without this causing any kind of contradictions or issues within La Olla. This characteristic of "multiple belonging" to different movements contrasts dramatically with the "exclusive belonging" that democratically centralized parties expect and enforce from their activists. Indeed, the history of La Olla is an example of performances of radical non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities that stem from the popular assembly movement. Originally, the Olla was held once every two weeks, organized by the Asamblea of Gallardo and Corrientes that met at a street corner in the neighborhood. Due to a number of issues[cxxxvii], the popular assembly movement started to unravel and the Asamblea of Gallardo and Corrientes, where the Olla originated, was no exception. Realizing, as Barbara a young woman from La Olla explained, that they could not sustain the activity any longer, but that "La Olla was an important political space that we had created" (interview Prieto) and that it "would have been a waste to let it die" (interview Prieto), this Asamblea decided to offer the space to a number of collectives that were meeting at FM La Tribu, an independent radio. Thus, the invitation was open and taken by Colectivo Caminantes (pro-Zapatistas), Usucapión (autonomists), and Pañuelos en Rebeldía (originally a popular education group organized within the Universidad Popular de Madres de Plaza de Mayo). In May 2007, members of these groups continued organizing Ollas Populares in Corrientes and Angel Gallardo. Soon after, the Asamblea was dissolved, but to this day La Olla continues to organize, once a month, an important space that challenges and de-naturalizes life under neoliberalism, although some of the initial groups that gave it new life are no longer blooming above the

surface. Indeed, La Olla's continuity is held today in the hands of just a few activists from the early days, while the majority are younger activists with political experiences in different, though similarly oriented movements within the field, such as La Mesa. La Mesa and La Olla share not only one of their members, but also La Mesa's sound equipment[cxxxviii], which travels all over the rhizome democratizing the use of an expensive item that greatly contributes to amplifying voices for social change. This sharing of activists, political spaces, and sound equipment is an example of performances of radical non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities, which contrast dramatically with the leftist macho hegemonic masculinist performances of the centralized political parties where many of the organizers within this field had their start in activism. As we saw in the example of the Interbarrial, centralized political parties such as the MST and PO do not hesitate to disrupt and destroy constructions of power that they cannot dominate. It would be unthinkable, within this logic, to share activists and equipment, as these parties would rather see an independent space disappear rather than encourage another organization to give it life.

Contrasting with these political parties' masculinist logic, the horizontal connections of this field —informed by a lack of desire to take over State power— have influenced and educated members of La Olla, especially when the connections involved different feminist organizations, most prominently La Casa and VXE. Through their contact with these and other feminist organizations, La Olla produced a number of changes in their public and private discourse, particularly in reference to insults and jokes, which in Argentina involve mostly negative comments on women's bodies (as in, for example, "conchuda/o" —cunt) and/or women's morals ("son of a whore" is a

common one). The Olla not only restrained from using these derogatory insults and jokes, but they also took a look at other less obviously patriarchal words, common in the Argentine slang. As one of the founding members, Norberto, explained, they stopped referring to women as "minas". "Mina" although a common slang for women, is the same word used for mines. Mines, Norberto was informed by a feminist, are there either to be exploited (for underground resources), or to exploit and destroy lives, as in landmines. After listening to their arguments, both women and men in La Olla dropped this word from their vocabulary.

La Olla's restrain from using anti-feminist words contrasts, again, with public performances of leftist macho hegemonic political masculinities and macho hegemonic political femininities, performed in centralized leftist political parties. The above mentioned struggle against the eviction of poor people carried out by the Major of Buenos Aires, neoliberal impresario Mauricio Macri, was initially organized by a number of groups, social movements, and political parties in the Coordinadora (Coordination against Evictions). Soon, movements such as La Olla realized that they were unable to reach consensus and work together with the political parties involved (PTS, PO, MST, and others) and abandoned the Coordinadora, focusing instead on their own activities against the evictions. The Coordinadora continued to meet and mobilize throughout the summer of 2009. I had the opportunity to attend two mobilizations against the evictions, one organized by La Olla and other popular assembly spin-offs, and another one organized by the Coordinadora, after these social movements left.

The first mobilization happened in front of the "Palacio de Gobierno" of the City of Buenos Aires, in a hot afternoon. Soon after the first few activists arrived, Avenida de

Mayo, one of the busiest intersections in downtown Buenos Aires, right in front of Plaza de Mayo, was blockaded and traffic was completely interrupted. The Circo Trivenchi[cxxxix], a group of artists with a background in the popular assembly movement and with the Okupas of Spain, also threatened by an eviction order from the City, begun setting up their trapezes and props, as hundreds of poor families with numerous children filled out the Avenue. Instead of the traditional long speeches, the discourse of resistance to evictions was articulated through artistic, funny, popularly engaging performances of clowns and trapeze actors, who took over the sky in Avenida de Mayo to show with their brave contortions over the hard pavement the consequences of Mauricio Macri's politics of exclusion and repression of the homeless and poor inhabitants of Buenos Aires. These young women and men delivered an impeccably gender balanced performance, where the most courageous and flashy acts on the trapezes were enacted by both men and women, although, following the pattern of almost every social movement in Argentina, the speaker who coordinated the performance was a man.

Contrast this performance with the protest organized by the Coordinadora after the social movements within the field of politics by other means had left. The social movements and political parties in the Coordinadora[cxl] arrived early at the intersection of Avenida de Mayo and 9 de Julio. As the columns grew in number, a group of "important" activists from these political parties and social movements organized the front line, holding a banner against evictions in Buenos Aires. With this hierarchical arrangement, they marched toward the City's Parliament located in Diagonal Sur and Peru, as great efforts were made by some activists to keep people marching behind their own banners[cxli]. A group of six young men and one woman were in charge of the

"murga", the traditional street music and dance performed during the "Carnavales" in Buenos Aires. While the young men were playing drums and other instruments, the bullhorn was given to the young woman. A young man taught her the following lyrics:

"Macri, Macri compadre, la concha de tu madre
Si te gusta la yuta, no te quedes con ganas
Mandanos al piquete la Metropolitana,
la cagamo' a trompadas[cxlii]!"

This young woman, who refused to be interviewed when I approached her, sang this insulting song for more than an hour, as we marched toward the Legislature of Buenos Aires, apparently unaware of the significance of using a female body part to put down Macri. Since Macri cannot be held responsible for his mother's "cunt", the responsibility for Macri's bad politics seemed to lie on this part of his mother's body, rather than on himself. As a young man in La Olla remarked, most insults in Argentina reference women, especially their sexual organs, even when insults are hurled at men. This manifestation of Argentina's male dominated cultural processes was complemented with the threat to "cagarlo a trompadas", to beat him up. Given the small numbers that were mobilized, the chant did not constitute a real threat, but rather contributed to sediment these groups' performances of power-over, where the use of sheer force against their own is only paralleled by their violent fantasies and threats against their enemies, in this case, personified in Macri and his Metropolitan Police.

Me Gusta Cuando Callas[cxliii]

Although public performances of power-over such as the one described above are absent in La Olla's discourse, their work toward gender balance is nevertheless

negatively impacted by the use of the microphone almost exclusively by a man, Norberto. Although women participate on equal basis in the development of the themes and in the general organization of the Olla, as well as in networking with the different organizations that participate in their monthly public events, Norberto's exclusive use of the microphone has negative connotations. As the only public voice is male, his reluctant monopoly of the Olla's public voice contributes to reinforce patriarchal prejudices against women's voices, because their voices are not regarded with the same prestige as men's voices are[cxliv]. This prestige of the male voice connects with Catharine Mackinnon's argument that masculinities define humanity (MacKinnon 1987), as women are relegated to the private, the moral, the subjective, while men take on the public stage, thus embodying the visible part of humanity. However, both women and men at La Olla explained that Norberto's use of the mike is not connected with him being a man, but rather with his own personality (as not only women do not use the microphone, but neither do other men) and past political activism. Norberto himself would rather see a woman or another man use the microphone, but has been so far unable to talk anybody into taking on this task given that all other members of La Olla feel they lack in the skills necessary for public speaking. Although this might be the case, the fact that most social movements and political parties have men do the public talk, cannot be regarded as a singular issue, that can be explained by past personal experiences and personality, but rather it indexes to the mainstream male dominated cultural processes of Argentina, especially those connected with politics. I talked with dozens of women in this field in Argentina, and although their first reply was always that not talking in public was a personal problem, the mere fact that this "personal problem" is shared by most women I

have interviewed renders it, far from a personal problem, into a social and political issue with negative consequences for gender balance, both within the social movements and in society at large. In order for femininity to embody humanity, women need to be heard in public as much as men are. On the contrary, examples abound of women who either do not talk, or when they do, they are not heard.

For the most part women that I interviewed connected their public silence with their own personal life histories (especially with their relationship to their fathers), however, two young women organized in the Espacio Chico Mendez, within the Asamblea del Cid, explained to me that they were uneasy talking because whenever they did, people in meetings (including women) would start checking on their watches, their cell phones, or talked quietly with somebody sitting nearby. These attitudes made it difficult for them to break out of their silence and address people in meetings, or in public. Similarly, women at the UAC RC reinforced the idea that not talking in public was connected with their upbringing, but at the same time, they explained that they only talked in public about issues that they were certain about.

The UAC RC organized a weeklong fast in Buenos Aires, with approximately fifty participants coming from all over the Andean region, where most of the highly polluting open-air mining takes place. As I participated in the different workshops and conferences held during that week, I observed that, just as in most other movements in Argentina, women talked considerably less than men. When questioned about this issue, one of them said: "I have only been studying this matter (extraction of natural resources by multinational corporations) for two years. I'm rather new to this. I don't like to say "boludeces" (nonsense), talk about things I don't know in depth". However, I was able to

observe her talking privately with other women, and her knowledge of the issue was more than appropriate to be shared in public, especially when contrasted with men's public interventions, many of which showed less comprehension of the matter than what this woman exhibited in private exchanges. As the week went by, and we became closer, I mentioned to her that I had noticed that many men talked abundantly in public, even when they did not know the issue well. In fact, I said something along the lines of "Men don't seem to mind when *they* say "boludeces" in public… They shrug their shoulders, best case scenario they admit to the mistake, and they keep on talking, as if nothing had happened, even after being corrected in public". "Yes —she answered— you can write down that men do that!"

Likewise, at a later meeting of the UAC RC, one of the young men attending talked for a great length of time trying to convey what his activism was about. Several other men intervened in the same way. However, when a woman tried to talk for a long time about the same issue, several men laughed behind her back and made faces to ridicule her rather rambling speech. While the speeches that had preceded hers might have been almost as rambling, nobody ridiculed the men. One of them, the same one that made faces at the rambling woman, only stopped talking when his own partner, a woman who appeared to be ten years older than him and whose activism is widely recognized in the field, publicly chastised him and other men for taking up too much time by engaging in abstract political speeches that had no incidence in what they were trying to pull together.

Although, for the most part, women are quiet in public, those who do talk usually present similar characteristics to the woman just mentioned: they are older, they have past

political experiences, and, in some cases, their voices are backed by their capacity to build power-with other activists and organizations, either through solidarity economy projects, as described in Chapter III, or as in this case, where this woman's prestige highlights her as one of the driving forces organizing a prestigious popular education group.

Some older women have found their voices, but never without a struggle. Fidelina, for example, is a woman in her early sixties, coordinator of a small grassroots NGO organized against open-air mining, within the UAC. As I found out through my interviews with members of her organization, this NGO was created as a response to a request for help from a mystic-political community in Córdoba. They asked Fidelina, and other Buenos Aires people who visited the community on regular basis, to become their voices in the capital city. During one of the first rallies, in front of the National Congress in Buenos Aires, Fidelina was asked to speak against the mining corporations. Although she had political experience with the JP in the seventies, this was her first time talking in public, in front of the 500 people gathered there. Fidelina, who is a professional painter, explains that: "I am timid, as most painters are". However, she felt compelled to talk, since there was nobody else willing to. "I had to counter my own prejudices, that there are certain things that I cannot do. I had to rely on my internal energy, believe that what I was going to say was already somewhere else, that what I was going to say had been constructed already, just trust my internal energy, because people give me back that what I am saying is truth". Fidelina's resort to her "inner energy" and her mystic fervor ("what I was going to say was already somewhere else") originates in her conviction that "what is going on now is that the planet has been functioning, so far,

with a masculine model, invasive, looting energy, straight and narrow energy that will destroy the planet. Everything that energy could give, has already given. But there has always been the feminine energy, that not only women possess, that proposes a different lifestyle. Feminine energy can take care of the planet, if allowed". This conviction that it will be feminine energy that will save our planet[cxlv] helped Fidelina cope with issues described above, lack of respect for women's voices in society in general, and the aggressive performances of political masculinities that permeate many public spaces.

Fidelina is aware of the struggle that it means for women to make themselves heard, and has been able to come up with interesting ways to face the issue. Banking on contacts established during the seventies, when she was participating in the youth of the Peronist movement, Fidelina was able to secure several famous Argentine actors, both men and women, who lend their images and voices for a TV ad against open-air mining[cxlvi]. Because both women and men in this video are famous, well known, beloved popular actors, people will certainly listen to their message. This choosing of the famous to set up the stage, opened the discursive space necessary for the Argentine public to also listen to Fidelina's words at the end of the ad.

Similarly, when Fidelina speaks at the UAC RC, the other activists listen to her. In this case, Fidelina's voice conveys the power and the energy of the dozen or so activists that her NGO can guarantee to cover actions organized by the UAC, such as the already mentioned fast, several "escraches", petitions to local governments, as well as street theater demonstrations. Fidelina's power performances, however, are not masculine, as she only talks when there is a need to point something out, never engages in long, abstract speeches as some men do in the UAC meetings, and does not try to build

power-over the UAC. When Fidelina tries to obtain a public space, she does not use the UAC's name unless there is consensus in the UAC for her initiative.

On the contrary, Daniel Blanco, another powerful activist in the UAC Regional Capital that organizes his own grassroots NGO, does not hesitate to overuse his voice in meetings, is always the first one to grab for the mike when the press is there, and, worst of all, many times he signs up the UAC RC for activities that he considers important, but for which there is no consensus to participate in within the UAC. I was present at one of their meetings, attended by him and a dozen other activists, when one of these incidents took place. Daniel, an activist whose real name I am not using, attends the UAC RC's meetings sparingly, but is constantly pushing initiatives against the destruction of the environment. He coincides with Fidelina in that they both consider that the State can help in this struggle, while most of the UAC RC have strong claims of autonomy from the state, political parties, unions, and churches. Shortly after the fast, Daniel came to one of the UAC meetings and informed the attendees that he had managed to secure a spot so that the UAC could participate in the "Jornadas en Defensa de los Derechos Ambientales: "Nuestro Ambiente Vale"[cxlvii]" (Activities in Defense of Environmental Rights: "Our Environment is Valuable") organized by the office of the "Defensor del Pueblo" (Ombudsman), Eduardo Mondino. As I found out later when interviewing the autonomists within the UAC RC, Daniel was often signing up the UAC RC for activities that most of those involved were against, given that they did not want to participate in what they viewed as State sponsored actions that only led to empower further people who already had power, as Mondino, and who would inevitably use the UAC for their own electoral purposes.

In this context, the autonomists fiercely resisted Daniel's use of the UAC RC name to further his own kind of politics. Luis Zamora, an ex-Trotskyist[cxlviii] explained to Daniel that there was no space in the UAC for his tactics, that the UAC did not favor participating in state sponsored activities and that Daniel's action were against the UAC principles of not having representatives that could empower themselves over their constituencies. When I interviewed him later, Zamora agreed that attitudes such as Daniel's, which I defined as guided by the principle of power-over, were almost always embodied in men like Daniel, who is "vivo, muy vivo" (cunning, very cunning) because he is able to secure "that space that he has, be the spokesperson, be the representative, go to the media, travel throughout the country talking". In his view, this is a serious problem for the UAC, in general, as it is not confined to the UAC RC, but rather it is manifested throughout the organization. For Luis, this is a male problem. There are no women who try to build power-over the rest in the UAC: "If Daniel's attitude is a problem, that problem has a man's face". However, he also points out to something else that I have observed, and that the problem of being always men who talk does not necessarily originate in the men themselves, but rather in the women who do not want to take on the role of addressing the media, either because they are not listened to, or because they feel insecure about their knowledge of the issue[cxlix]. This is not a problem for Daniel, who, according to Zamora although at times he does not have his figures on pollution and open-air mining straight, he still happily monopolizes the public space and tries to "represent" the reluctant UAC.

Because the women themselves shy away from the public spotlight, the role of feminist men like Luis in the UAC are of extreme importance. Luis, for example,

recognizes that most of the UAC's leadership is in the hands of the women who help coordinate the different assemblies in different provinces of Argentina. However, he notes, when the media arrives, women turn to Daniel or some other guy, to talk on the subject, as in these women's view, "they are the experts". Zamora insists that they talk themselves, since they can convey what is really important, the analysis of the Asambleas within the UAC. But women hardly ever do, as I was able to attest myself.

On a hot summer afternoon, women and young men from Fidelina's NGO arrived early on the day of the "escrache" against the Secretaría de Minería, located in Diagonal Sur, a couple of blocks away from Plaza de Mayo. They brought flyers, banners, a tent representing a mountain, several other props, and began painting graffiti the walls of the Secretaría. Soon, somebody else arrived with a bullhorn, and one of the women began chanting slogans against open-air mining. Fidelina's NGO performed a theater piece against open-air mining, and soon the press arrived. The journalist, a man, asked the woman with the bullhorn why they were there, and what were they doing. Although Fidelina was standing next to her, this woman and Fidelina, who was handing out fliers, immediately turned around and pointed to Daniel. In this way, Daniel accessed the media, and thus the public space, while the women remained doing what can be construed as traditional gender roles, the domestic organization of the movement: taking care of banners, fliers, paint, and other chores, while Daniel, who had arrived empty handed, personified the UAC RC in front of the TV cameras, reinforcing, once again, a male dominated public space.

As Luis pointed out, it is not the case, for the most part, that men in the organizations are eager to take on the public role, pushing women to the sides. On the

contrary, it is mostly the women themselves who lack the desire, ambition, or the self-assurance necessary to address the public through the media. I was able to talk with a woman journalist at another "escrache", this time organized by the above-mentioned Coordinadora against the city of Buenos Aires' office of urban planning, when the social movements of my research were still part of it. I noticed that this journalist had interviewed two men, so I decided to ask her how she had chosen this two people. She explained to me that she had first asked two women, an older woman and a younger one, and that both of them had pointed her toward a guy. The journalist mentioned that almost every time she tried to interview women in street actions, she was referred to a man "who knows how to talk about this better than I", the women explained. However, the journalist told me that while one of the men was really knowledgeable on the issue, the younger man had his facts all mixed up. This younger man had no problems whatsoever in talking with the media, even if his facts were not completely straight —an attitude shared by several men in social movements who talk in public or through the media even when they might not be experts on the issue at stake. However, men such as Luis, who have engaged in a self-critique process of their past vanguardism and orientation toward resolving gender problems in the future, have a positive influence on this, as they themselves rarely address the media or talk in public, while they constantly encourage women to do so.

While it is true that some men encourage women to participate, non-feminist men can effectively act as gatekeepers of the prestigious role of the spokesperson. At MTD Castillo (fictional name), which I place in the grey area of the field of politics by other means, precisely because of their lack of discussion on issues of gender balance, I

observed what happens when non-feminist men are not interested in women's empowerment. As I was beginning to contact different women in unemployed workers organizations to travel with me to the US to present at conferences, universities, and community centers, I tried to identify women who could narrate their experiences coherently and with passion. Listening to many women talk in small assemblies of unemployed worker, I thought Mauricia was a likely candidate. She is an artist with a middle class background, highly educated, who moved to the outskirts of Buenos Aires to participate in the organization of a land take-over. Mauricia was clearly a respected "referente" of her movement, extremely smart, and altogether fearless. Married, at the time, to Pedro, a former journalist student now also a respected "referente" of the same movement, Mauricia was hesitant to agree to the trip. Her concern was that Pedro was less than a dedicated father and was completely absorbed by his activism, neglecting often their 4 year-old child. Mauricia was not comfortable leaving their child with him for a whole month, as the tour schedule demanded. As the tour date approached it became evident that Mauricia would not be able to leave the child with him, although he was really interested in her traveling to internationally promote the MTD. Her tribulations regarding this decision brought us close, since we had to talk about the trip over a number of weeks. Finally, Mauricia decided not to travel, and have another compañera travel instead. It was during these weeks of intense dialogues with Mauricia and other women at the MTD that I mentioned to her that I was surprised to see women doing all the hard work, including coordination of assemblies, but never once addressing the press. Mauricia said that she had thought about it, as well as other women, but they were inevitably scared when the journalists aggressively crowded the speaker with their mikes

and cameras. We talked about techniques to overcome this fear, which is really not different from stage fear, about how rehearsing before hand with fake journalists might help, and other ideas. Finally, as we were going from one MTD to another in the movement's dilapidated old car, Mauricia talked with Pedro about women starting to address the media. His response was unforgettable: "If women want that privilege, women will have to fight for it, just as we all have to fight for what we want in this [capitalist] system". His response was interesting on more than one level. Fist of all, he implicitly admitted that addressing the media was a privilege, and that men were enjoying it, while women were not, "because they were not fighting for it". Second, comparing the struggle that he thought women should engage in with the unemployed workers struggle for employment and dignity, framed the issue of prestige of women and men within the movement on the same level as the struggle of unemployed workers against the government, local employers, and the global forces of neoliberalism, which they were manifestly fighting against. I could not help but wonder if he was conscious that he was placing certain men, his "compañeros" and himself, as holding the same role as the government, local capitalists, and the IMF were holding against unemployed workers. I did not think at the time that I should pursue this line of argument with him, but I did pressure him on the basis of equality within their movement, something they were all keen to prove existed. I suggested men with more experience in public speeches, like himself, spend time with the women who wanted to talk in public helping them come up with strategies, but he did not see any need to do this, as men could talk already with the media and they were not in a position to "lose their time" training women who were too shy to address the media. Both Mauricia and I dropped the subject and men continued to

monopolize the public space when a portion of it was allotted to the MTD Castillo through the media. Given that even in movements where at least some men would like to see women talking with the media this rarely happens, movements such as the one described above, where men expect women to fight over this privilege, might not see women rise above the domestic movement roles in the near future. Pedro is an example, unfortunately, of the resilience of leftist macho hegemonic masculinity, which, spread throughout society, insidiously finds its way into social movements such as MTD Castillo, whose "referentes" still believe that gender democracy is a secondary, divisive item, better left to be resolved after the revolution.

I asked many women why did they think it was mainly men who were eager to talk in public and address the media. Several of them alluded to men's egos, a certain need to make themselves heard that reinforces their own notions of their self-importance. As seen before, these are characteristics that describe, in general, leftist macho hegemonic masculinities. One of the women described these performances of leftist macho masculinities as "the need to prove that they have the biggest [penis]". Her statement, although evidence of the widespread phenomenon of men monopolizing the public space, however, might be decoded as biological reductionism, as some men do not feel this need. Luis Zamora, for example, is somebody who could hegemonize the public space, as he did when he was a national candidate for the MAS and the MST, but does not seem interested in doing so anymore, since he developed a critique of his own vanguardism as part of two centralized political parties. When he was into vanguardism, he considered he had to "enlighten the masses". As he became an autonomist, he was more interested in allowing social actors to speak for themselves. Although not

necessarily because of feminism, his newly acquired political stance has nevertheless feminist consequences, as it tends to empower the grassroots, for the most part embodied in women[cl]. In this way, politics by other means allows for the challenging of normalized gender inequities.

While I had only met Zamora in passing while he was still in the MAS, I had the opportunity to share activist experiences with other men, who have changed in similar ways to Zamora once they broke out of their centralized organizations. One of them, originally a member of a Trotskyist organization, is now a lecturer at the University of Buenos Aires (UBA from now on). Paulo is now in his forties, and helps coordinate a number of activist groups organized around issues of higher education. Paulo is also one of the main authors behind a longstanding leftist activist-academic publication and one of the founders of Multitudes. When still in this Trotskyist party, Paulo was homophobic and had a tendency to authoritarianism. He was well known for using his considerable activist prestige to shut people up in meetings, use sexist vocabulary to put down his political adversaries, break up grassroots organizations by expelling activists whose actions he had labeled as "treacherous", and other manifestations of leftist macho hegemonic masculinity. However, Paulo, born in a tough barrio in the outskirts of Buenos Aires, changed his political performances as a result of the experiences with movements that arose around December 2001. As many of the activists within this field, Paulo also became disillusioned with electoral politics, particularly with the Trotskyist tendencies that had previously deeply engaged his political life, and turned his attention to non-hierarchical organizations. I observed Paulo dealing with fellow activists in several meetings of Multitudes, as well as in wider meetings, where Multitudes interacted

with other non-hierarchical, university based social movements. I was surprised to see that Paulo had drastically changed his style. I attended four consecutive meetings, all of which lacked something that for Paulo was key, a previously posted and discussed agenda. On the fourth meeting, it became evident that Paulo was having trouble controlling his anger over the lack of an agenda, and there were several comments from Multitudes members about Paulo's upset. He brought the issue up in an agitated way, but nobody picked up the glove. This meeting had been called to discuss the organization of a workshop. Paulo and some others had worked a few weeks before on a first draft of this workshop. This draft met with resistance from a sector of Multitudes that exhibited a more radical autonomist tendency than Paulo's. It was collectively decided, then, that this sector, led by Maura, a woman in her early thirties, would work on a second draft that would be presented to Multitudes. When the date for the presentation arrived, a Sunday afternoon, Maura wanted to orally present the new proposal, which had not been written, and much less forwarded earlier to Multitudes for consideration. Since I have known Paulo for so long, it was evident to me that he was furious. However, he was able to control his voice, he did not yell, and he did not insult anybody (which would have been his normal response twenty years ago). Instead, he brought up the issue, showed his concern, explained why not sending the material earlier for discussion was problematic, and patiently heard all of Maura's reasons for not writing it. A meeting that in the past would have ended with hurt feelings and anger, this time ended with a commitment from Maura and other activists to meet once more, clean-up the proposal, and put it in writing for Multitudes consideration. I interviewed Paulo at length one evening after his classes at the UBA to ask him about this change in his political performance, especially

regarding sexual orientation and his behavior during meetings. What was responsible for these changes? Had something happened in his life that explained it? As it turns out, while still in the PO, and although a student of Philosophy at the progressive University of Buenos Aires, Paulo had never befriended any openly gay men. Once he left the organization and began organizing within the field of politics by other means, Paulo met a gay activist for whom he felt respect. It was the acquaintance and friendship with this gay man, through non-hierarchical connections, that enlightened Paulo. Given that the PO, as Néstor Perlongher denounced in the seventies and I was able to observe in the eighties, was homophobic, it is not surprising that Paulo, in spite of being an extremely smart man, would not be able to confront this ugly side of his personality, since it was reinforced by his surroundings, first growing up in a tough barrio over forty years ago, and later, as a member of the masculinist PO until the mid nineties.

Although Paulo's changing views on homosexuality surprised me, I was even more impressed by his capacity to change his political performances, abandoning his aggressive tactics for a performance of radical, non-hegemonizing political masculinity that allowed him to critique what he considered serious problems of Multitudes, but without forcing a breakup of the organization over these matters. When I asked Paulo where did he find this ability to cope with different organizational and political styles within his own group, he explained to me that once he left the PO, he became aware of the destructive nature of what I call leftist macho hegemonic masculinity performances of power, and had engaged in a deep criticism of such behaviors. Although he is still concerned about the informality that permeates the post-2001 movements, he is also conscious that it is "this" (organizing with non-hierarchical organizations), or the "old

politics", which he does not want to go back to. Moreover, members of Multitudes are constantly calling Paulo out on his "temper", and, although they respect his activism and knowledge of Marxist philosophy, they do not overlook his misgivings, as their non-hierarchical structure allows them to criticize this man, who, if still in the PO, would probably be a member of the Central Committee, well insulated from criticism of the PO's grassroots.

Performances of leftist macho hegemonic political masculinity, as the ones that Paulo performed while still active in the PO, are responsible for many splits within social movements and organizations in Argentina today, just as they were in the past. My own and my compañerxs expulsion from the PO shows this, but it was not an isolated story. Several women that I interviewed narrated stories where it was evident that splits in organizations that were doing important work, were just the result of men's egos ramming heads against each other. As Marisa, a woman whose activist interests are connected with the UAC and, in general, with food availability issues, made this clear to me. "Approximately twenty people created an organization to help democratize access to food in the interior of the country three years ago. Although we were doing great work, and were received well by a number of families who were learning how to grow their own food, our work came to a halt when the two main guys could not agree whether to continue visiting the same families, or take on new ones." At first glance, this disagreement seemed easy to broach, as some people could have continued visiting the families already involved, and a few others could try to contact new ones. However, the tensions over these differing views led the organization to collapse, as these two men could not agree on how to continue with the work. Because these two men were

prestigious, while the rest of the organization did not have the same amount of social capital, the organization had to close down once they left. Examples such as these abound in social movements and they seem to index to a concern on the part of certain men to enhance their power and prestige, to the point of hurting the very same organizations they created.

Gender and Repression at the Road Block

Although not connected with issues of internal democracy, but rather with strategies to deal with repression, the Massacre of Avellaneda could also be decoded in a similar way. There is no doubt that the federal government, in the hands of President Eduardo Duhalde at the time, was keen on repressing the nascent coalition between middle classes and unemployed workers at the Pueyrredón Bridge on June 26, 2002. However, a careful observation of the videos and pictures taken before and after the confrontation began, shows clearly that it was mainly men who responded violently to the police provocation that ended in the Massacre. I asked one of the "referentes" of the MTD Verón what had exactly happened, and he said that "the compañeros were sick and tired of the police provoking them, and instead of withdrawing when commanded, they resisted. When the police began pushing them with their shields, they responded with their sticks, which most of them were not even wielding properly". This allowed for a number of images that show the "piqueteros" (and even one "piquetera") beating police officers with their sticks, faces covered. The government used these images to suggest that the two deaths, and the hundreds of people injured by lead bullets, were the result of the "terrorist 'piqueteros'" own violence, as they fought against each other[cli].

The outcome of this Massacre was important, and complicated. On the one hand, some of the movements within the CAV blamed the responsibility on the fact that they did not have a centralized organization that would have made it easier for the "referentes" to control the activists on the front line to avoid the repression, or at least minimize its impact. On the other hand, in 2003, and partially as a result of the internal, contentious dynamics opened by the Massacre, MTD Solano left the MTD Verón. At the time, some activist in La Verón blamed the lack of centralization on the Massacre, while MTD Solano remained fiercely autonomist and anti-hierarchical[clii]. Most of the groups within the CAV, with a strong "peronismo de las bases[cliii]" component, formed a different organization, the Frente Popular Darío Santillán, in which there is more centralization than in the previous CAV. Another group, Quebracho, broke out of the CAV immediately after the Massacre, and went back to organizing independently. This constituted a relief for the movements that remained together, who did not have to deal any longer with the violent tactics at protests that Quebracho is widely known for[cliv].

La Verón took the issue of media portrayal of their activists as "terrorists" seriously. I was present at one of the meeting after the Massacre, when one of the referentes proposed that in the future there should only be women at the front of the "piquete", without faces covered and without sticks. He met a fierce reaction from several of the men attending, who were certain that if they uncovered their faces they would be recognized by the police and later, when alone, beat up or worse. I knew this to be true, as at least two "piqueteros" from the organization had been allegedly kidnapped by plainclothes policemen during several hours, one of them returning badly beat up, and the other not only beat up but also with cigarette burns all over his body. Eventually, the

argument that prevailed was that, through the media, they had to show to the Argentine people that they were just families with no employment . From then on, La Verón's "piquetes" were embodied in barefaced individuals, with no visible sticks, and with women in the front line.

Following a night-long party, and a morning animated by my puppet show, as well as several other artistic performances, La Verón advanced on former President Duhalde's neighborhood to make him the object of an "escrache" for his perceived role in the Massacre. As discussed previously, the women were at the front, with faces uncovered and no visible sticks. They were followed by thousands of protesters, which included most of the unemployed worker movements, as well as supporters from the anticorporate globalization movement from the US (including Naomi Klein's team[clv]) and middle class Argentine organizations. Since this was not the first time that the "piqueteras" marched at the front of the columns, the police was prepared for them. Instead of the usual burly men in riot gear, a few blocks before we arrived to Duhalde's home, we were presented with several rows of fences, and three lines of policewomen, who were supervised by an officer —also a woman.

As soon as we arrived, the women at the front started violently expressing their anger at the policewomen, who were stopping them from getting closer to Duhalde's home. Unfortunately, most of the women in the front lines could find no other way to express their contempt for the policewomen other than calling them "Whores!" The scene was laden with different layers of meanings. On the one side, policewomen are usually from poor backgrounds and live in similar neighborhoods to the one in which the "piqueterxs" live. Indeed, sometimes, they don't only live in the same neighborhood, and

know each other, but can also be family members. For example, Malvina, a "piquetera" formerly in La Verón, now in the Frente Darío Santillán, had an older daughter that she put through police academy. But the fact that both policewomen and "piqueteras" shared in a common class background did not matter when they found each other on different sides of the fence, viewing each other as through a deformed mirror. It did not matter either, at least initially, that they were all women, since the "piqueteras" did not feel any sense of solidarity with these women, but rather much loathing for their present employment, which they equaled with prostitution. The fact that the "piqueteras" could not think of anything worse to say to these women reveals that even in these progressive social movements, there is still much work to be done to dismantle patriarchal relations of oppression[clvi]. However, the same scene, a few seconds later, reveals that this is indeed a field where meanings can be contested.

When I heard the cries of "whores", I could not refrain myself. Raising my voice, I tried to explain that the problem here was that they were police, not whores. That it would have been much easier for all of us if they had been whores. Although most of them did not answer, one woman, a well known "referente" got closer to me and said, also loudly: "It was about time that feminism made its way into the "piquetes"!

A few minutes later, Maxi Kosteki's mother, who died of cancer shortly after, used a megaphone to ask the policewomen if they had no children, if they were not aware that the police was killing innocent young people, who had mothers like herself, and like the policewomen themselves. At this, several younger women in the police lineup broke down and started crying, shifting their bodies from the straight lines that they had been ordered into by the officer. The female officer realized that she was losing control of her

troop, and, holding her baton in one hand and smashing it against her other hand, began walking up and down the lines, threatening and shaming the women who were crying. At this crucial moment, the "piqueteras" who had called them "whores", changed their chants to "the 'compañeros' are here, jump the fence, jump the fence!", in an open invitation to change sides and join the struggle for social change. This change in the chants, from patriarchal slurs against women who were working for an enemy who had taken the lives of their "compañeros", to an invitation to join them in their struggle, reveals the non-essentialist nature of the confrontation. By asking the policewomen to join them, the "piqueteras" acknowledged the policewomen's living experiences, recognizing the poor women inside the uniform, women who in all likelihood lived in a similar neighborhood to that of the "piqueteras", women who can change sides.

Although the confrontation was not devoid of discursive violence, as shown above, at no point was there an escalation of this violence into physical violence. After the Massacre, and before the "escrache" to Duhalde, La Verón had lengthy discussions on what went wrong at the Pueyrredón Bridge previous to the Massacre. They discussed how their engagement in a physical confrontation with the police had given the media and the government the space they needed to blame the deaths on the "piqueterxs" themselves. Although their strategy of placing women at the front was not meant to discourage per se a physical confrontation between "piqueterxs" and the police, but rather to offer the media a picture of defenseless women instead of face-covered men with sticks, nevertheless women instead of men at the front of the mobilization resulted in verbal, even patriarchal discursive violence, but no physical acts of defiance and aggression that could have turned the police force once more against them. Avoiding

repression was important for these movements at the time, since the Massacre cut down on their capacity of mobilizing thousands of people to demand more welfare plans, as they had been doing in the past.

Although recipients of the plan, or those who were hoping to obtain one were forced by the organization to attend the roadblocks, at the risk of losing the plan if they did not, many people after the Massacre abandoned the organization because they were terror struck by the brutality of the police repression at the Bridge. Those who continued to organize, had to face their terror, sometimes overcoming it, and sometimes not. I accompanied these movements to their first blockade of the Pueyrredón Bridge a few months after the Massacre, and witnessed how, when it seemed as if the police would attack, some women fainted, and many men and women ran away from the Bridge (including myself!). It took time and effort to bring them back, but, as the weeks went by, it became evident that many people would rather turn to a "puntero" to get their plan, even at the risk of losing their dignity. As the risk of losing their lives was, understandably, more important to many unemployed workers than their dignity, La Verón never completely recovered, as many families finally surrendered to the pressure from the punteros and abandoned La Verón[clvii]. A year later, MTD Solano left the organization, citing as a problem that all efforts of La Verón were geared toward obtaining welfare plans from the State, through putting pressure at the roadblocks, while Solano's analysis was that engaging in a battle with the State over welfare plans was a dangerous road that they rather not walk, given that the State might give them the plans they needed, but the State also might take more lives away in repressions. Since La Verón had discussed that only those who participated in the roadblocks could qualify for

welfare plans obtained in that manner, Solano decided to abandon the roadblocks and deepen their commitment to their solidarity economy projects, that, although funded by the plans, were meant to eventually take off on their own, liberating the organization from the struggle to obtain them from the State, and liberating them, at the same time, from wage-work.

Women within this field are notorious for handling well violent threats. Karina, a schoolteacher who lives in La Rioja, co-founder of the Asamblea Famatina, has been the object of several attacks by government officials and multinational mining corporation goons in her province, La Rioja. Home of former neoliberal President and present Senator Carlos Menem, La Rioja is a poor province where the wealthy and those in power enjoy a degree of impunity that would be unthinkable in more progressive areas of Argentina. Perhaps as a response to this impunity, La Rioja has also spawned courageous activists who resist this highly polluting industry[clviii] through direct actions that have been successful in limiting the power of the multinational corporations that ransack its mineral resources. Many of these activists are women who have been guaranteeing a three yearlong permanent block of the road that leads to the mining fields of the Barrick Gold Corporation in the Famatina mountain. I interviewed Karina in Buenos Aires when she traveled from La Rioja to gather support for her people's anti-mining projects. Karina had to request permission from a local judge to travel, since she had been accused of attacking a government official during a roadblock. However, as the video the "asambleístas" were able to produce clearly shows, Karina, far from attacking anybody, was able to peacefully resist as she raised attention to what could have easily turned into a violent assault by local government officials. These officials were keen to

break up the roadblock of the Asamblea de Famatina, placed by the Asamblea to guarantee the suspension of the gold prospecting project. In Youtube[clix], we can see Karina lying in the middle of the road, blocking the entrance of the local officials to the mine, as the officials grab her and attempt to remove her from the road. One of the men accompanying Karina almost immediately confronts one of the officials and blows are exchanged, although without too much conviction. Karina uses this time to go back to the middle of the road, and lie down. They removed her several times, and Karina kept creeping back, to lie down in front of a pick up truck. Finally, two officials hold her in the air, to the side of the road, while the pick up truck passes the roadblock area. During this time, Marcela, Karina's co-worker and also a member of the Asamblea de Famatina, carries out a similar resistance, out of camera. Alone and defenseless, the women do not lose their cool (although Marcela can be heard swearing) and just continue to make it difficult for these officials to ignore their stand. Although they finally got through, and later were able to implicate Karina legally, eventually charges were dropped and the Asamblea continues to guarantee that their mountain, the beautiful Famatina, will not disappear, along with their water and their population, all of it endangered by the pollution that this industry generates.

Karina became active in politics for the first time out of love for her "cerro", the Famatina, a mountain threatened by open-air mining, whose polluting techniques put the lives of those she loves at risk. Similarly, Mariana, a woman in her late fifties, began organizing for the first time when her family's lives were threatened by a perhaps not completely natural disaster in the city of Santa Fe, where she lives. In 2003, the city of Santa Fe suffered a Katrina style flood during which the poor neighborhoods took the

brunt of the catastrophe as, throughout the 1990s, they had been all but abandoned by the local and national governments. The survivors explained that the city flooded because the local government had received bribes to allow certain works on the Salado River, which were poorly planned and executed. These works ended up complicating the river's flow, to the point that it flooded the city. Mariana, a woman in her fifties, was part of an important group of neighbors that tried, in vain, to get the authorities' attention. When all prescribed manners of addressing the powers that be failed, Mariana and a group of women who had lost everything in the flood, began doing spontaneous "escraches" which in time led to organizing the "Marcha de Antorchas[clx]" (March of Torches) to protest the negligence of the local government. Mariana explained to me that one day, before they started the "escraches", President Néstor Kirchner traveled to Santa Fe to meet with Carlos Reutemann, the Governor of the Province of Santa Fe, one of the main "inundadores" (flooders), as Mariana and her friends call those who were deemed responsible for the flood. When she and her friends found out about Kirchner's visit, they organized a mobilization to protest in front of the government palace. After much chanting and shouting at the gates, a policeman approached them and told them that two men could go in and talk with the President and the Governor. Mariana asked why two men, and was answered that the policeman was just following orders. However, because only one man dared to go in ("only one had the 'huevos' –balls- to go in") eventually Marcela was allowed to enter. She refused their coffee and refused to sit by Reutemann's side, but was nevertheless reassured that everything was being taken care of. But Mariana knew this was not true. Thirty barrios had flooded and more than 27,000 families were without housing. Their homes were ruined, all their stuff ("my history")

was lying in contaminated mud and had to be thrown away while many of the houses had to be partially rebuilt. The government did not even provide them with gloves to clean up the polluted houses. Moreover, Mariana was certain that they lied about the amount of people who had not been accounted for. Fearing political connotations, they refused to talk about "desaparecidos" (disappeared), instead, they invented a new noun: "desencontrados" (not found). Finally, when it was clear that nobody would help them, Mariana started losing her patience. This woman, who had no activism in her past, found the wife of a politician at a store, "loading up her grocery cart" and confronted her: "Que atorranta que sos, vos y tu marido!" (You are a lowlife, you and your husband!). "Instead of trying to look pretty, your husband should at least provide us with boots and gloves to clean our houses!" When the woman started crying in shame, Mariana realized that she, Mariana, a woman in her fifties, with three children and no husband, a mere clerk at an office, had power. She began wielding that power, along with a small group of other women and some men, in the many other "escraches" that they organized. While the "escraches" did not have the desired consequence of forcing the government to provide the much needed and deserved material help and to own up to the high numbers of people who died as a consequence of the flood, the "escraches" did provide Mariana with a way out of her looming depression. As Mariana explained, she wanted to kill Reutemann. Although she did not engage in planning to murder him, she did commit to pursuing Reutemann almost everywhere he did something in public. As a witness to an "escrache" organized by HIJOS against a military officer explained: "they are not killing him [the torturer, but] they are killing him socially" (Kaiser 2002).

Indeed, the "escrache" is aimed at producing a form of civil death, an ostracism from society, it is an act of justice in itself, embodied in the people who are denouncing and the people who witness the "escrache". It is prefigurative justice, as it does not depend on what the courts will determine this person's punishment should be, but rather, the simple act of gathering a group of people who denounces somebody in power creates a sound punishment, hence is justice, as this person will probably feel isolated from his/her neighbors, and will be exposed to all of society through the media, as the "escraches" are, in general, media happy. As the HIJOS[clxi] explain, "when there is no justice there is 'escrache'" (Situaciones 2002b). Indeed, justice there was not, for many years in Argentina, for the military that committed crimes against humanity during the late seventies and early eighties. The "escrache", then is inscribed within the actions of the field of politics by other means, where disillusion with democratic institutions gave rise to a different kind of politics, not geared toward gathering strength to produce change in the future, but rather, to produce changes in the here and now. In the case of the "escraches" to the "inundadores", more than anything else, Mariana explained, they were seeking public condemnation of those envisioned as perpetrators, since such social recognition would help the protestors cope with the pain of losing their homes, their history, and in many cases, family members.

Mariana's pain, as well as that of her neighbors, did not start with the flood, but much earlier. Since the nineties, when neoliberal policies and practices became widespread both at the local and the state level, many in Santa Fe became impoverished, unemployed, and driven to the margins of the city. It was precisely in these margins where the flood was worse, and where many people lost their lives. As Mariana

explained, long before the flood they were already suffering. The flood just brought it all out.

Mariana's "escraches" are an example of how social movements within the field of politics by other means link their "private" pain with neoliberal practices of oppression and dispossession, engaging in untamed, creative, daring direct actions that include not only "escraches" and road blockades, but also the interruption of international traffic between Uruguay and Argentina, as in the case of the ACAG.

Performing Gender at the Meetings and Direct Actions

Women have a strong presence in the ACAG. A woman, Cristina, the Secretary, always coordinates the meetings, and women write the communiqués, bring food to the shed that protects them from the weather at the blockaded bridge, and populate the different actions. Women, therefore, are effective leaders with the capacity to generate spaces where people can express themselves. However, there is also an implicit —and at times explicit— idea that women are not listened to as men are by the general public. For this, or other reasons, it is mainly men to who address the public through the media. The ACAG's public discourse is always voiced by men, who are also supported by the most powerful organizations within the ACAG, as in the Sociedad Rural and the FAA. Some women are conscious of this dynamic. During my participant observation at the ACAG, Claudia, a woman with a long-term involvement in the movement, told me: "People listen more to men, that is why we let them talk in public". She had that experience herself in the ACAG, where her voice was sometimes not heard, but whenever a man shouted his ideas (which sometimes coincided with hers), this man was listened to and people voted for his proposals. This is a clear example of variations of how gender is

made and decoded in this space, where although there is room for women to hold leadership positions, these positions are for the most part confined to what could be construed as the domestic side of the ACAG, while there is male dominance in their public discourse. Women, who are conscious of the urgency of their struggle, allow for men to be the voices of the ACAG so that the message goes through.

Doris Summer reminded us during the Interrogating Civil Society Conference in Amherst in 2008, of the 1968 Prague students who distributed pornography to distract the Russian soldiers in the tanks (Chan 2007). As she noted, the students in Prague engaged in a playful action to confront a bloody, powerful, determined enemy. Several decades later, we cannot but feel warmth in our hearts towards these young people who enacted such a lighthearted resistance to brutal oppression. At the same time, though, and given the performative aspects of gender, the feminist in me sees great dangers in the use of images of women's naked bodies in support of liberatory causes, especially if female naked bodies are deployed among suited Heads of States, as organized by Greenpeace and the ACAG[clxii].

Most men and women in the ACAG do not uphold a feminist analysis. Moreover, some of them are ostensibly anti-feminist. For example, my main contact at the Asamblea, Raquel, sent me once a PowerPoint presentation which clearly stated, among other things, that feminism was an invention of women who did not want to use bras. In Raquel's view, women might claim to be silenced by many (both men and women), but this is not connected with gender oppression, but rather a natural occurrence given that men are in general more aggressive in getting their ideas out: "boys will be boys".

Raquel, of course, is not alone in her claims against feminism, which are shared by many in her community. Thus, it is not surprising that the ACAG would not hesitate to use a female body for the purpose of "advancing the cause". At the same time that a small statue of the catholic Virgin Mary (a woman with a child who's never "known" a man) is prominently displayed amongst Argentine and Uruguayan flags at the blockade, as mentioned before, another woman, Evangelina Carrozzo, queen of the local Carnival, was commissioned by the local chapter of Green Peace in coordination with the ACAG, to disrupt the Vienna Summit of Presidents from all over the world in 2006. During this important meeting, Carrozzo stripped of her fur coat and donning only her carnival outfit, displayed a sign that read "NO PULP MILL POLUTION", in front of the obviously pleased heads of state. This act —by which the assembly was able to get more publicity than from any other action they had engaged in— constitutes without any doubt a reinforcement of gender stereotypes. Men are heads of state, thinking people, dressed in serious suits, while Carrozzo strips to call their attention to matters of life and death for the people of Gualeguaychú. Butler (2004) explains that since there is no inner core to gender, and since gender is constituted by a series of acts, it is our very acts that make gender. Thus, Carrozzo's performance contributes to the fixation of traditional "feminine" gender roles, in which the woman's body is what matters, over the woman's mind. On the contrary, women in positions of relative power in the ACAG are performing roles of leadership, such as coordination of meetings and different committees that take on important tasks. In this way, and because of the performative aspect of gender, these women are making gender, both for themselves and for the community in which they participate, in a different way than Carrozzo's reinforcement of

traditional gender roles. Carrozzo's performance at the summit reinforced the normative gender discourse while women who successfully organize within the ACAG contest, in a limited way[clxiii], traditional gender roles that would rather have them quiet at home, raising children and taking care of their husbands. On the contrary, although Carrozzo was not just exhibiting her body but also her defiance, it still remains true that in order to enact that defiance in a way that would have an international impact, Carrozzo had to strip, while men in the ACAG who hegemonize the ACAG's public discourse enact this defiance in other ways, which do not involve exposing their naked bodies[clxiv], not just by addressing the media, but also, as Alfredo De Angelis did (fieldnotes), crossing their tractors to stop traffic to Uruguay.

By deploying Carrozzo's body at the Vienna Summit, the ACAG manipulates a masculinist exploitation of women's body images for their own ends. This act, which is in fact nothing but a continuation of the exploitation of women's bodies at the commercial, heteronormative "Carnaval", though for purposes more altruistic than tourism, created a rather interesting situation at the road blockade itself, as it clearly divided women whose bodies can be exposed from those whose bodies were "owned" by a man, and should not be publicly exposed. During one of my visits to Arroyo Verde, the area where the road blockade is located, Luis, a middle age man with longstanding participation in the conflict, proposed during one of their lunches that since Carrozzo's performance in Vienna had been so successful in generating an international media response, it would be appropriate to organize a "tetazo". A "tetazo" is an event in which women bare their tops in protest[clxv]. Sharing the table at Arroyo Verde was this man's wife, Susana. In a clear, yet modest voice, she asked him: "What about myself and our

(teenage) child? Should we bare our breasts too?" Amid great laughter, Luis just went mute and the issue was not brought up again.

Conclusions

The field of politics by other means is comprised by prefigurative social movements which connect to each other through rhizomatic connections, informed by the principle of "power-with", the power that social movements can engage in to create spaces in a communitarian way. Thus, their constructions of power are democratic and egalitarian and tend to increase the participant's movement's power, as opposed to diminishing another organization's power to increase their own —a common practice of the leftist centralized political parties where many of the "referentes" of the field had their start in politics. These rizhomatic, egalitarian flows of power allow for massive participation in their direct, creative actions, as in the case of the ACAG, as well as for less dramatic, but nevertheless striking street performances of cultural politics, as in the case of La Olla. The energies diverted, from example, from wage work into solidarity economy projects, explain only partially the power of these organizations. An important source of power comes from the synergy generated by the multiplicity of encounters and "cross-pollination" that occur when women meet with other women, with local and international activists, with feminist women in the "Encuentros", as well as from diverse instances of socialization that women could not engage in before the crisis, especially for working class women.

Horrified at the State, after enduring the disappearance of 30,000 activists during the 1976-1983 dictatorship, decoding the democratic governments that followed it as managers of the IMF, struck by the fall of the Soviet Union, and deeply influenced by

Zapatismo, social movements within this field articulated a powerful critique of centralized, hierarchical structures of power. Through rhizomatic, egalitarian connections, and solidarity economy projects, these social movements, not aimed at state power, but rather at social constructions in the interstices of capitalist relations of production, reflect changes in the mode of production itself. As Hardt and Negri (Hardt 2000) explain, the globalization of capitalism and the uneven and ethnicized (Ong 2006) proletarianization of the whole of society (Hardt 2000), require an adjustment in the structures of the social movements that oppose it. While the industrial proletarian lost its key status as the privileged subject of the revolution (due to off-sourcing and to the growth of the service industry in Europe and the US, but through the IMF induced destruction of the national industry in Argentina), these twenty-first century social movements present power structures that lack in the strict hierarchy of the revolutionary leftist political parties of the past. Aimed at state power, and organized through leftist macho hegemonic masculinist principles that equate social struggle with war, these leftist democratically centralized parties' organizing strategies resemble the hierarchies and the centralization of the State. There was (and still is) little room in these kind of parties for performances of radical non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities that create power not by competing and snatching power from other popular organizations, but rather by creating communities with fellow activists. On the contrary, contemporary social movements within the field of politics by other means create power at the same time that they address issues that sometimes coincide with that of the leftist parties, as for example, a concern for the exploitation by multinational corporations of underground and agricultural resources which not only deplete the country of much needed resources but

also contaminate the environment while offering few jobs in exchange. However, their themes exceed that of the leftist political parties and delve into cultural politics as they articulate critiques of cultural processes under neoliberalism, as in issues of sexual diversity, exclusions, and marginalization.

Their rhizomatic structure explains, as well, how many of these movements can extend their influence into territories that are not their own, as their non-hierarchical, non-cooptive constructions allow them to be in many places at the same time, as activists in this field can be active in more than one movement, roaming freely where they are most needed. Examples of this capacity to reproduce themselves outside of their own territory can be found the ACAG's travels to Buenos Aires to gather more visibility as they take their plight to Argentina's center of power. In this same vein, some of La Olla activists are also activists in La Mesa de Escrache, and other similar organizations. Similarly, UAC activists participate in numerous meetings and actions as they move from one corner of the country to another, to support each other in their struggle for a clean, sustainable environment. Their multi-sited struggle resembles that of the multinational corporations that they fight against, as these corporations move throughout the globe to extract resources in polluting ways in Global South environments because Global North countries are increasingly setting limits to this kind of corporate exploitation of resources. Indeed, almost at the same time that President Cristina Kirchner met with Barrick Gold officers to promise to them that they will continue to extract gold using cyanide in Argentina[clxvi], the European Union Parliament cautioned their member States against allowing the kind of polluting mining that is taken place throughout Latin America[clxvii].

This field is engaged, in diverse ways, with what I conceptualize as performances of radical non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities that include egalitarian connections with other movements, and a non-aggressive, non-violent display of power that has been important to maintain peace throughout the deployment of their direct actions. Because the field came together as an unintended consequence of neoliberalism, the result of citizen's disillusion with the State as well as a generalized lack of confidence in political parties and unions, their direct actions have an untamed streak, that while making it possible for them to achieve some results, it also magnifies the potential for a violent repression by the State. After much frustration during the nineties, these movements began to avoid regular civic channels of protest, favoring instead actions that either put material pressure on the authorities by making life's normal flow impossible, as in the roadblocks, or prefigure justice in their own execution, as in the "escraches". In many cases, they resort to street theater techniques that help them reach broader audiences, especially through the media. In other cases, they have decided to have women in the front line to emphasize the fact that they are just families in need, rather than violent people who want to cause trouble. The technique, adopted after the Massacre in 2002, of placing women in the front of the "piquetes" not only helped them with their public image after the Massacre, but also gave rise to interesting exchanges with policewomen, that although discursively violent, never reached the point of physical confrontation, thus helping the movements avoid the deadly consequences of a violent physical confrontation with State agents. Likewise, women holding roadblocks against powerful mining corporations, far away from any source of support up high in the Andes, were able to peacefully resist attacks from government officials who support open air

mining, succeeding not only in avoiding physical harm, but also managing to use the incident to call attention to the role of the provincial governments in supporting a practice that only brings destruction and death to the communities it touches.

Although the direct actions of social movements in this field are similar, with "escraches", roadblocks, and street theater, there are important differences in these diverse social movements regarding their gender constructions. Although men's voices represent most of these movements through the media and public speaking, in some of them, nevertheless, there is a concern for gender balance understood as an important part of internal democracy, as can be observed in both La Olla and the UAC, where there are not only feminist women but also influential feminist men. Members of La Olla, in particular, have been exposed both to the mainstreaming and sidestreaming of feminism, as they have been influenced both by feminist theory learned at the Universities, and by feminist practices and discourse emanating from popular grassroots NGOs, such as La Casa del Encuentro and VXE. On the contrary, organizations such as the ACAG and the MTD Castillo have members who exhibit a more or less obvious anti-feminist discourse, which explains certain practices such as using female semi-naked bodies to advance their cause in international arenas, or refuse to support women address their fears and overcome their shyness to talk in public[clxviii].

Although weaker at the ACAG and MTD Castillo, for the most part the prefigurative aspects of these movements are strong, and explain their concern for gender balance and egalitarian constructions of power among themselves and in their connections with other social movements. In this sense, they have advanced in their quest for internal democracy, something that was lacking in the Latin American

organizations of the past (Stahler-Sholk et al. 2008), this aspect of their organization is key for the future of popular organizations in Argentina. It is important, then, that their private and public persona is visualized both as democratic and feminist friendly, which they increasingly are, as women gather strength to overcome male dominated cultural processes in Argentina and make themselves heard by adopting a number of strategies, as they are the supported by men who support the idea of women's leadership. The role of the sidestreaming and mainstreaming of feminism has been key to raise awareness within the movements themselves of gender issues that might have otherwise been neglected, as is the case in many centralized political parties where issues of gender are considered divisive of the movement and should wait until after the revolution to be solved. Examples of these are found in organizations like Multitudes, founded by ex-Trotskyists, one of whom was able to overcome his homophobia and his performances of leftist macho hegemonic political masculinity through non-hierarchical activist connections with gay and feminist men and women.

The changes in politics and activism in Argentina have been impressive. Due to a number of factors, which range from structural changing conditions of production under neoliberalism, to the impact of the fall of the Soviet Union and the influence of Zapatismo, to the popularization of feminism through connections between unemployed worker organizations, recovered factories, and the popular assemblies were feminist attended, a space has opened to harness affective energies into alternative power constructions. These movements are not aimed at hegemonizing the public space but rather contribute to populate it with progressive, gender balanced structures of power that foster manifestations of peaceful, yet relentlessly effective direct actions. Through this

alternative power construction women and men set limits to stage one of neoliberalism, and challenged the neoliberal governmentality mask of its second stage.

Notes

[cviii] I follow Arturo Escobar's definition of territory, which he achieves by connecting Felix Guattari's notion of territory (Guattari 2009) with Colombian Black Communities' practices and theorizations (Escobar 1998). Escobar defines it as "the fundamental and multidimensional space for the creation and re-creation of the social, economic, and cultural values and practices of the communities" (Escobar 1998) —a space where "dissident subjectivities" can emerge (Guattari 2009: 24).

[cix] As I write these lines, the Gualeguaychú conflict has undergone some major changes, as the Hague Tribunal finally pronounced itself on the issue. Both the Uruguayan and the Argentine government must check on Botnia's potential pollution. To allow for the joint monitoring of Botnia's emissions, "Pepe" Mugica requested that the Gualeguaychú road blockade of the international bridge be lifted. As the Asamblea refused to lift the blockade, arguing that the Hague Tribunal did not pronounce itself on the issue, the Argentine government, that has vowed not to use repression to clear the bridge, proceeded to denounce 11 members of the Asamblea for criminal behavior. Only one woman was identified, the Secretary of the Asamblea. The rest of the leaders denounced were men. A few days after the National Guard took down names of protesters at the road blockade, the Asamblea passed the resolution to lift the blockade for 60 days, while they will continue protesting by the side of the road. As consensus could not be reached, there was a vote among the participants, with 402 voting to lift it and 315 voting to continue http://www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/elpais/1-147772-2010-06-17.html.

[cx] Ferguson derives this concept from the women's movement in the US.

[cxi] Later in this chapter I will address different examples of power-over through leftist macho performances of political masculinities by leftist political parties. Here I will only offer one example connected with the women's movement. In the "2001 Encuentro Nacional de Mujeres", militants in leftist political parties maneuvered to organize the "Encuentro" without the consensus of the social movements that were participating in it. This action provoked, among other issues, the withdrawal from the organization committee of feminist organizations such as "Las Azucenas" (Alma and Lorenzo 2009). The presence of leftist political parties also impacted the way that the "Encuentro" used to operate in a number of ways. For example, during the 2003 "Encuentro" voting was promoted over consensus building, and representation over direct democracy practices of non-representation that had been prevalent in the past (Alma and Lorenzo 2009). While democratically centralized political parties tried to hegemonize the "Encuentro" by repeating their slogans over and over again in an effort to convince the women present to vote for their "program", in 2010, "Las Azucenas", "Las Furiosas", the Women Space of the " Frente Popular Darío Santillán", "Malas como las Arañas" and "Feministas Lesbianas" circulated over the web a call to bring the upcoming 2010 "Encuentro" back to its original non-hierarchical organizational structure.

[cxii] Neoliberal biopower is characterized by its uneven, non-homogenous global nature. While it harnesses energies in certain areas of the globe, it is responsible for the

destruction of human lives in other areas of the planet. Likewise, it harnesses only the energies of those whose skills are necessary for its markets, while it leaves out those who are not necessary.

[cxiii] Although Autonomist and Autonomous movements appear in Argentina in the late nineties, with an emphasis on non-hierarchical, democratic power structures, it is unlikely that the "Encuentro" itself influenced their power structures. The "Encuentro", which began in 1986, precedes the Autonomist and Autonomous movements' appearance, but became massive in 2001, when women from recovered factories and "piqueteras" (who began to attend in small numbers as early as 1996 (Di Marco 2010) joined the meeting. Since women in these popular organizations were not participating before 2001, it cannot be predicated that the "Encuentro" influenced these movement's power structure. So far, I have been unable to trace a direct influence of the "Encuentros" over the internal power structures of the movements attending the "Encuentros", although I have found evidence of changes in women's relationship with their partners, in their conceptions of motherhood and abortion, and other important issues connected with gender specific demands (Alma and Lorenzo 2009; Sanchez 2009 – 2010). Claudia Korol (2004) explains that at the same time that "piqueteras" and recovered factory workers joined the "Encuentro", the "Encuentro" also became the site of bitter, at times even physically violent confrontations between sectors that competed over the different meanings that were discussed on a wide array of issues. Not only did the Catholic Church organized months ahead of time a strategy to intervene in the Encuentro —which resulted, for example, in abominations such as conclusions being distorted by catholic activists who volunteered as note takers (Alma and Lorenzo 2009)— but at the same time the "Encuentro" became also the site of power-over techniques displayed by activists in democratically centralized leftist parties. These women performed radical hegemonic femininity in an attempt to dominate the "Encuentro", hammering the participants with slogans hatched by their CC, in a vain attempt to impose their agenda (Alma and Lorenzo 2009). Perhaps the "Encuentro's" tension between the aggressive intervention of the Catholic Church and the leftist democratically centralized parties left little room for discussion on the issues that concern these women within their own organizations. As Amanda Alma, Paula Lorenzo, and Claudia Korol explain, these tensions in the "Encuentro" highlighted the secondary role assigned to gender issues in the power structures of many popular organizations (Alma and Lorenzo 2009; Korol 2004). Research is necessary to establish potential fluxes between activists in diverse social movements that might go unnoticed in the big plenaries.

[cxiv] I am using Auyero's concept of the gray zone(Auyero 2007) to characterize the ACAG because state actors do participate in this movement. Although political parties cannot participate as such in the ACAG, members of those parties do, some of which hold public office, some who did in the past, and others who do not. Although State actors are also present in the other organizations, they are not part of the organization itself, but rather influence the movements through interactions from outside of the movements, as in the case of the "punteros" and the MTDs.

[cxv] I had initially decoded women's participation in "domestic" chores of the movements as examples of leadership, until Ann Ferguson commented that this was in effect a division of labor similar to the one held in the majority of nuclear families, where the woman is in charge of the domestic aspects of life, while men work outside the home, taking on the public roles, and as MacKinnon notes, contributing to define the public space, and by extension, humanity as male.

[cxvi] Soon after the Massacre, and as consequence of it, the CAV went through a major split, out of which a new organization, the Movimiento de Trabajadores Desocupados Anibal Verón was born (MTD Anibal Verón). Quebracho, a centralized, controversial, direct action oriented group, who had initially been part of the CAV, broke out of this front.

[cxvii] www.laollapopular.blospot.com

[cxviii] The ACAG's understanding of "clean environment" is complex and reveals the diversity of its constituents. While for their radical sectors, such as the Ejército Alpargatista de Liberación Nacional and Aguamanda, a clean environment excludes the deployment of the local version of Monsanto's roundup ("glifosato") on genetically modified crops (fieldnotes), the FAA, the SR, and other conservative groups only addresed the issue of Botnia's potential contamination, as these organizations represent those who are making profit from this highly questionable agricultural practice. I addressed the issue with my collaborator at the ACAG, Raquel, but she did not think there was any contradiction here. For her, "gmo" crops and roundup are like a cold compared to cancer, the latter personified in Botnia. Because the SR and the FAA have more power within the Asamblea, even though they have named themselves Asamblea Ciudadana Ambiental (Citizen's Environmental Assembly), they only monitor Botnia's potential pollution and have no interest in defending their environment from these other contaminants. No official investigation is under way to prove or disprove the effect of "glisofato" in the area, but many older people in the town explained to me that today they cannot fish in the rivers that traverse the area, because all the fish are gone. Fishing is now only possible out in the Uruguay River, which does not cross through the contaminated fields as the little rivers do.

[cxix] As a result of the mass mobilizations starting in December 2001, and the apperance of the popular assembly movement, social movements in Argentina elaborated on the concept of horizontalism to allude to power structures that were different from the hierarchical popular organizations of the seventies.

[cxx] "Sidestreaming" is a concept developed by Sonia Alvarez (forthcoming) to assess the influence and travels of feminism horizontally, as feminist practices and theories influence social movements. I am indebted to Alvarez and the Sidestreaming of Feminism research group within the Consortium for Social Movements and 21st Century Cultural-Political Transformations for their support and mentoring through this aspect of my research. I am also indebted to Vanessa Prieto, with whom we wrote "Los Viajes de

los Feminismos Contemporáneos en los Movimientos Sociales de Argentina" (Monteagudo and Prieto 2010b) sections of which I am using in this dissertation.

[cxxi] The sidestreaming of feminism can only be separated from the mainstreaming through methodological analysis, as they are closely intertwined in everyday life, the sidestreaming feeding (critically) through the mainstreaming, as activists access feminist knowledge through Universities and Government mainstreaming of feminisms (Monteagudo and Prieto 2010).

[cxxii] As I am writing these lines, the ACAG, responding to threats by the federal government, lifted the permanent blockade. Although the Hague Tribunal specifies constant monitoring of Botnia's emissions, from within the plant, the agreement reached by Uruguay and Argentina only mentioned 12 prearranged visits to the plant per year.

[cxxiii] This would be the first but not the last time that thousands of citizens of Gualeguaychú mobilized to free De Angelis, although the circumstances surrounding the second arrest were not directly related to the conflict over the pulp mills, but ostensibly over taxes on agricultural exports.

[cxxiv] http://www.clarin.com/diario/2006/05/13/elpais/p-01001.htm

[cxxv] Diana Taylor (Taylor 1997) argues that after the intentional burning down of the Picadero Theater in 1981, the producers of the radical Teatro Abierto performances under the dictatorship moved their venues to a strip-tease cabaret. The rationale behind this was that the military would not allow/promote the destruction of the meat market they visited frequently. Taylor decodes the Teatro Abierto producer's strategy as a reduction of the female "to pure body" (1997:239).

[cxxvi] Putnam's interest in these communities is not aligned with visions for social change, since he is interested in social networks that support the status quo, rather than challenge it (Joseph 2002)

[cxxvii] Loosely translated, la Olla's slogan is: "Don't let the pot get dented, don't let the street go quiet".

[cxxviii] Glocal refers to the "interpenetration of the global and the local, resulting in unique outcomes in different geographic areas (Ritzer 2007).

[cxxix] A complete list of La Olla themes can be found at www.laollapopular.blospot.com.

[cxxx] "Situación de calle" is a concept that social movements in Argentina have developed to de-essentialize the notion of homelessness. The concept derives from the situationist movement and implies that in the intersection of structural and personal situations, anybody can be rendered homeless.

[cxxxi] "Trata" refers to "Trata de Mujeres", traffic of women who are many times kidnapped and forced into prostitution.

[cxxxii] www.lacasadelencuentro.com.ar.

[cxxxiii] Although initially the Partido Obrero refused to organize the "lumpem proletariat", soon they created the Polo Obrero, which receives and manages unemployment welfare plans. For more information on the Polo Obrero, see http://poloobrero.org.ar/content/una-historia-del-movimiento-piquetero.

[cxxxiv] www.varonesporlaequidad.blospot.com

[cxxxv] These activities include a potlatch "liberar objetos, liberar sujetos" (free objects, free subjects) where people can leave objects they don't need anymore and pick up those they do need. Their actions include painting a mural on the wall of a bank (which the bank paints over on regular basis), artistic performances, non-male dominated tango workshops, videos of social significance and the already mentioned open mike.

[cxxxvi] I think of this kind of polluting, and dispossessing mining as environmental off-sourcing because corporations like Barrick Gold and others enjoy fabulous deals that allow them to keep most of the profit, while paying low taxes (I offer a full explanation of the deal that the mining industry obtained during the nineties in a footnote in Chapter I), all the while destroying the environment in Global South countries. Once the initial construction is over, few jobs are offered to the local people, who many times become sick in alarming numbers due to cyanide and chemicals that run into waterways (Giarraca 2007; Svampa 2008).

[cxxxvii] The issues included the pressure and aggressions of leftist political parties, particularly the PO, the PTS, and the MST. But although this was a serious problem, there were also problems stemming from the openness of the organization itself, given that anybody who walked into the space once had the same decision power as those who had been organizing in the assembly for a long time. Another issue was the sectarian culture of the Argentine left, which manifested itself strongly in the assemblies. Most assemblies opted for voting, and used it to silent minority dissent. The traditional Marxist parties contributed in no small measure to the diminishing number of neighbors by staging brutal and in some cases even physical attacks on those who had little political experience or simply thought differently. However, the direct democracy and direct action practices established by the assemblies became a vital experience for many activists, who are now engaged in other political activities(Adamovsky 2004), such as La Olla itself.

[cxxxviii] Although my research time did not allow for me to take on a complete mapping of social movements within the field of politics by other means, in the future, perhaps it would be useful to try to complete the map of the rhizomatic connections within this field, a task that would be much aided by following the route of the Mesa's sound equipment, which is so complex and intricate that many times activists from La Mesa lose track of it and send emails all over the internet to try to find out who has it so that they can retrieve it and use it themselves, or lend it to yet another movement.

[cxxxix] http://www.trivenchi.com.ar/

[cxl] These included the PO, PTS, MST, Partido Comunista Capital, Partido Comunista CE. Also included Several progressive unions, such as the Central de Trabajadores Argentinos (CTA) and Asociación de Trabajadores del Estado (ATE), and some social movements, such as The Frente Darío Santillán, and the Asambleas del Pueblo.

[cxli] Keeping people marching behind their own banners is important for the political parties involved in this protest, as later own their leadership will assess the success of their mobilization by the amount of people that each group, section, or party mobilized. In the PO, for example, when I was an activist in the organization in the late eighties and early nineties, long meetings were held with those responsible for the different "fronts" where the party operated and great pressure would be exerted against those whose numbers fell behind the expectations that had been clearly delineated by the leadership in previous meetings.

[cxlii] Macri, Macri, compadre (word used to describe the godfather of your child), cunt of your mother, if you like the cops, don't refrain yourself, send us the Metropolitan (police) to the road blockade, we will rain blows on them (the actual phrase, cagar a trompadas, indexes to hitting somebody seriously, using the word to shit as a way of conveying serious punishment.

[cxliii] "I like you when you are quiet…" poem by Pablo Neruda. http://www.tinet.cat/~elebro/poe/neruda/neruda22.html

[cxliv] The issue of the challenges that women face when they talk in public goes beyond the field of politics by other means, as exemplified in a video of an "escrache" that the "ruralistas" organized against the then Vice Governor of Buenos Aires, Daniel Scioli[cxliv]. In this video, posted in Youtube[cxliv], a group of five or six women are aggressively addressing Scioli. Scioli can be seen talking over them, as they all talk angrily, at the same time, at him. Shortly after this initial scene, we can hear, though not see, a man's voice. As soon as the man's voice enters the scene, Scioli turns to him, and this time, he listens. The women go silent. After paying attention to the man for a few seconds, the women start yelling again, and Scioli continues to talk over them. I observed similar dynamics in the exchanges of the ACAG, some of whose actors were also part of the "ruralistas", most prominently, Alfredo de Angelis. Before getting to those exchanges, though, I will introduce the reasons that led the people of Gualeguaychú to organize against the installation of a Finnish pulp mill in Fray Bentos, Uruguay, across the Uruguay River from this Argentinean town.

[cxlv] I asked Fidelina if she was familiar with eco-feminism, but she said she was not a feminist and had not heard about this particular kind of feminism. As many women in Argentina, Fidelina is not aware of the many trends in feminism, and identifies feminism with liberal feminism, upheld by "women who want to do what men do" and compete with "men over men's worlds" as she described it. I am familiar with the works of Mary Daly (Daly 1990) and Starhawk (with whom I collaborated in many protests in the US

and Canada) (Starhawk 1982), but do not uphold their vision of feminism as I am suspicious of theories that essentialize women and men's energies as ontologically different. I believe both constructions of performances of hegemonic masculinity and performances of radical, non-hegemonizing femininities and masculinities are social constructions, with specific, cultural and historic manifestations.

[cxlvi] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MHuLPLWCGoc

[cxlvii] http://www.proteger.org.ar/doc828.html

[cxlviii] Zamora was twice elected as a National Representative to the Argentinean Congress first with the MAS, and later on with the MST. After 2001, Zamora, who, like some other Trotskyist organizers became an autonomist, organized a movement-like political party in 2003 that gathered 12% of the vote in the city of Buenos Aires, Autodeterminación y Libertad.

[cxlix] These women's decision to not talk in public constitutes a performance of what R.W. Connell terms "emphasized femininity" (Connell 1987b), as, at least in relation to re-defining the gender of the public spheres, they implicitly accept men's dominance in the prestigious role of addressing others in public.

[cl] I am not trying to allude here to Deleuze's and Guattari's notion of becoming a woman, becoming an animal (Deleuze and Guattari 2008a), etc. While Deleuze and Guattari seem to be alluding to changes in the molecular level, I am explicitly addressing here changes on the level of subjectivities and gender power constructions.

[cli] It was only thanks to the numerous rhizomatic connections that the CAV had been able to establish with the, at the time, powerful middle class Asamblea movement that the truth finally came out, and eventually, two police officers were incarcerated. The political responsibility, which the CAV still hangs on former President Duhalde and former Governor of Buenos Aires Felipe Solá, was never investigated.

[clii] MTD Solano produced a document in which they explain the reasons for leaving, mainly their interest in developing a solidarity economy in their own neighborhoods, instead of blockading bridges in demand of more welfare plans. See the complete text here:
http://www.perio.unlp.edu.ar/problemas%20sociologicos/textos/otros%20autores/documentos/EL_MTD_SOLANO.htm.

[cliii] Grassroots Peronists, not part of the Partido Justicialista (PJ).

[cliv] Although I do not place Quebracho within the field of politics by other means (because they are centralized, they do not have an interest in gender balance, and lack in prefigurative aspects) I did interview some of its members who explained to me that their violent tactics are meant to show the general public who the enemy is. In order to show this, Quebracho has, allegedly, engaged in actions such as blowing out ATM machines,

placing small bombs in banks, burning down (at least partially) government buildings, burning down parked buses and trains to protest fare hikes, etc.

[clv] I collaborated with Klein in the making of the Take. Although she engaged deeply with the piquetero movement, Avi Lewis, the director of the movie felt strongly that they had to focus, and decided to portray only the recovered factories in the Take, since they felt that the piquetero movement might be short lived and did not present such a clear alternative to failing capitalism as the factory take-overs did.

[clvi] Social movements in Argentina have developed two ways of thinking the issue of prostitution, following broadly liberal and radical feminist conceptions of prostitution. One, that aligns itself with liberal feminism, claims that this is an activity that can and should be legalized, so that prostitutes, understood as sex workers, can be protected in their professional work through unions. AMMAR CTA (http://www.ammar.org.ar/noticias-cabeza.htm), an organization of prostitutes within the center-left Central de Trabajadores Argentinos, upholds this position. However, a group of autonomist women originally within the CTA, uphold a radical feminist stance against envisioning prostitution as sex work, defining themselves instead as "women in situtation of prostitution". These women, in 2002, formed AMMAR Capital (http://www.ammar-capital.org.ar/article.php3?id_article=3). For AMMAR Capital, women are always exploited when forced to sell sex, as they cannot exert control over their own bodies. They do not seek unionization, but rather look for ways to empower themselves through different workshops and activities that include efforts to learn new skills so that these women can sell something other than their own bodies. AMMAR Capital is also engaged in the promotion of PPs aimed at creating economically productive spaces free of capitalist logics of exploitation (fieldnotes) .

[clvii] See Chapter III for a full explanation of the role of the punteros and their connection to neoliberal governmentality.

[clviii] The European Union Parliament recently voted on a resolution to advise the EU countries against open-air mining, mainly due to the use of high amounts of cyanide and the resultant pollution. Their concerns dovetail with those of the UAC.

[clix] Asamblea de Famatina http://www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/sociedad/3-149146-2010-07-09.html

[clx] http://antorchas.org.ar/

[clxi] http://www.hijos.org.ar/

[clxii] Although involving the female body, the action organized by the Asamblea of Gualeguaychú had a completely different content than the display of their own naked bodies organized by protesting Nigerian women. After being repressed by the Shell Oil police, these women threatened to "shame" Shell Oil by publicly displaying their vaginas, which would have meant social ostracism for the targeted male executives of the corporation (Wamala 2002). Similarly, an elderly Mau-Mau fighter in Kenya successfully

resorted to nakedness to shame the young soldiers who were training their guns on her and fellow protesters (Turner and Brownhill 2004). Although all of these three acts involved various degrees of nakedness, the protest at the Vienna Summit was a highly sexual display of culturally and historically specific desirable body proportions (Urla and Swedlund 1995), a manifestation of male oppression as women whose bodies do not fit these proportions are considered less beautiful and desirable than those bodies who do fit those parameters. On the contrary, both the Nigerian and the Mau-Mau fighter resort to nakedness to enact a taboo, that, when broken, brings shame and social ostracism not to the naked woman, but rather to the man who is observing her. Contrast Carrozzo's "Carnaval" performance with Greenpeace-Argentina in Vienna with the sober aspect of the two women who interrupted Steve Westwell, BP's chief of staff while addressing World National Oil Companies Congress attendees, as oil kept gushing into the US Gulf Cost. It should be noted, though, that the strategy of deploying not two sober activist, but rather a sculptural Carnival Queen to disrupt international meetings worked better in the short term, as Carrozzo had much more media exposure than the two Greenpeace activists protesting BP's role in the Gulf Coast spill. http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/06/22/greenpeace-disrupts-bp-executives-speech-to-oil-industry-conference/?ref=world

[clxiii] Their leadership is limited because only men address the media and it is mainly men to meet with government officials.

[clxiv] It is not a minor detail that Carrozzo, originally a dentist student, went on to do porno pictures for men's magazines after the Vienna Summit.

[clxv] The same year Carrozzo stripped in Vienna, 2006, a sector of feminists attending the Encuentro de Mujeres in Jujuy organized a "tetazo" against the Catholic Church, some of whose members were praying together against abortion. Although Carrozzo's appearance in a Carnival suit, and the "tetazo" carried out in Jujuy all share in the exposition of female body parts, the tetazo was a clear affirmation of embodied womanhood, devoid of pornographic connotation, as women of all ages, shapes, and sizes jumped up and down, chanting anti-Catholic Church and pro-abortion slogans, quickly flashing their bare breasts, or, in some cases, their bras. Carrozzo's performance, on the other hand, had porn-like connotations. For a short video of the Jujuy "tetazo", please see http://media.argentina.indymedia.org/uploads/2006/10/el_tetazo.mp4

[clxvi] http://www.clarin.com/politica/Glaciares-investigar-relacion-Cristina-empresa_0_293970775.html

[clxvii] http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2010-0145+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN

[clxviii] More research is called for on the topic of feminist influence on these social movements. My educated guess is that there must be a link between the previous past militancy of the "referentes" and participants. While La Olla and the UAC are constituted at least partially by Marxist and Anarchists whose political theoretical

background upholds the questioning of gender roles in society, the ACAG although highly diverse, does have members of the right wing Sociedad Rural (SR) leadership. Although I have not attempted any ethnographic research on the SR, this organization is notorious for its links to the hierarchy of the conservative Catholic Church, as well as its support to the 1976-1983 dictatorship with its emphasis on Christian values.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This dissertation explores the political praxis of a number of social movements in Argentina that have emerged as a response to neoliberalism. While there are many movements and progressive NGOs in Argentina, I focus on those that practice what I call a "politics by other means". These movements present prefigurative characteristics, that is, they enact in the here and now, within their own organizations, the social changes they propose. Their power structures are egalitarian and, in regards to gender balance and democracy in general, present a stark contrast with the hierarchical popular organizations of the seventies.

Their "other means" of doing politics included not only democratic power structures, but also the enactment of untamed direct actions that paralyzed the country. Women became visible in this field of protest as the "feminization of poverty" was followed by a "feminization of resistance (Korol 2004; Borland and Sutton 2007)". Women, with their children, were the main actors in the "piquetes" (highway roadblocks), although their leadership within the unemployed worker organizations was for the most part confined to secondary roles. Lacking in experience in political parties or unions, influenced by their participation in the non-hierarchical "Encuentro Nacional de Mujeres", as well as by local middle class feminist women in the popular assembly movement, their presence introduced issues of non-hierarchy in the movements they constituted. This, combined with a deep critique by the male leadership of their past vanguardism, gave rise to a space were material energies were produced within non-

capitalist relations of production (Gibson-Graham 2006). The power of these organizations was fueled by the harnessing of the affective energy generated by the interaction between working class and middle class, local and international activists, students and academics that visited and supported them. Women's affective energies were increased as this new configuration of forces allowed them to socialize outside of their homes. Many working class women were able to re-organize their domestic lives and travel outside of their own neighborhoods to meet with women in similar social movements, connected with their own movements through a rhizomatic, intricate web of solidarity.

Mid-nineties, a wide range of social movements engaged in highly visible and contentious direct actions in response to the deleterious consequences of neoliberal policies of exclusion and dispossession. Through their struggle, they were able to set a limit to the first stage of neoliberalism (Molyneux 2007). Unable to guarantee the free circulation of goods due to the roadblocks organized by unemployed workers, the State, through World Bank programs, implemented work/welfare plans in an effort to control the social upheaval, launching the second stage of neoliberalism[clxix]. Donning a "human mask", neoliberal policies were modified to aid those who were left out of the markets. The meager economic support offered by these welfare/work plans was wrapped, however, in governmentality. While neoliberal governmentality (Foucault 2008) was applied to the unemployed workers themselves, disciplinary governmentality was deployed on the middle classes. Unemployed workers were offered a small stipend in exchange for clearing the highways in an effort to manipulate them through their economic interests. At the same time, disciplinary governmentality was applied to the

middle classes to break their partial alliance with unemployed workers. Suffering themselves from a sharp drop in their income levels, sectors of the middle classes collaborated and organized with unemployed worker organizations. In order to free the highways, not only the unemployed needed to be disciplined through economic measures, but also discourse had to be applied to the middle classes so that they would start envisioning unemployed workers as dangerous and lazy. Although this double move worked in most cases, resulting in unemployed workers falling under the domination of state brokers ("punteros") who kept them out of the highways, the social movements of my study engaged in practices of community building. While their organizations confront the first stage of neoliberalism by focusing on roadblocks during the late nineties and early eighties, in the years that followed, they adapted their tactics and strategies to challenge its second stage.

This second moment of confrontation with neoliberalism constituted an unintended consequence of neoliberal practices and policies. Unemployed workers used the funding provided by work/welfare programs to the advantage of their own communities, organizing solidarity economy projects within egalitarian networks, the Proyectos Productivos (PPs from now on). Sectors of the middle class, most of them organized in popular assemblies, collaborated with the unemployed, at the same time that they created their own PPs. In this way, a new field was created, with a radical, egalitarian power structure bound by an emphasis on affective politics (Jaspers 1998; Collins 2001; Gould 2009; Goodwin et al. 2001; Berezin 2001; Barker 2001; Irvine 2002). By harnessing the material and affective energies of their constituencies, these activists engaged in building communities of resistance to neoliberalism. These

communities empowered individuals, especially working class women, through a carefully balanced act of discipline and care that allowed their structures to function without abusing their membership.

Their power structures stood in opposition to the exploitative practices of the "punteros", powerful big men and a few women, who were the visible face in the neighborhood of neoliberal welfare plans. Managers of welfare/work plans, the "punteros" manipulated unemployed workers' labor for their own benefit, or to benefit wealthier sectors of their own communities. The "punteros" exerted power-over the unemployed workers, who were forced to labor under his direction. In this way, the workers were dispossessed not only of their labor, but also of their capacity to build alternatives that would allow them to collectively empower themselves. Working for the "puntero" made it impossible for these workers to take charge in their own lives. On the contrary, people, and most especially women working in the PPs were able to introduce changes in their domestic lives that further empowered them socially.

The power structures of the field of politics by other means also contrasted with the manipulative power constructions of leftist centralized political parties, who mobilized unemployed workers for their own political objectives, penalizing those who refused to attend to their rallies by cancelling their welfare benefits.

The anti-neoliberal social movements of my study present five distinguishing characteristics: first, a claim of autonomy from Churches, political parties, unions, and most importantly, from the State; second, an emphasis on direct action; third, non-hierarchical structures of power; fourth, prefigurative aspects which include a strong concern for their own territory, and fifth, performances[clxx] of radical, non-hegemonizing

political femininities and masculinities. Radical, non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities are subjectivities developed in social movements, traversing social classes and embodied in people with different personalities. These subjectivities are characterized by their peaceful, unrelenting, non-aggressive and non-competitive performances of power-with. Within the movements themselves, radical, non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities explain their egalitarian, community building non-hierarchical structures of power. Their interest in democratic structures extends, as well, into their rhizomatic web of contacts, interactions, and sharing of discursive and non-discursive spaces of resistance. This rhizomatic web allows these movements to extender their power beyond their own spaces, as they are able to access, through inter-movement mobilization, wider publics than they would on their own. Furthermore, their rhizomes of power have helped them build alliances with more powerful sectors of society, especially in the case of the unemployed workers who could connect with middle-class popular assemblies.

My methodological approach involved a collaborative reflection with different organizations, combined with analysis of flyers, videos, movement's and NGO's webpages, international and local multidisciplinary scholarship, and ethnography and participant observation at multiple, related sites within the field of politics by other means. My research builds on years of activism while still living in Argentina, and on intense international political solidarity experiences that allowed me to spend many months at a time in the country (2002-2005). My research also benefited from several months touring internationally with "referentes" of these organizations, between 2003 and 2005. Finally, from 2006 to 2009, I engaged in more rigorous academic research,

spending a total of over 12 months doing participant observation in the field, which included a month-long work in a recovered factory, and long term participation with a wide array of social movements located in Buenos Aires, Gran Buenos Aires, and Gualeguaychú, Entre Ríos.

Summary

Neoliberalism is a set of mobile and shifting discursive and non-discursive technologies deployed unevenly, in gendered and ethnicized ways (Ong 2006), throughout the world by a global capitalist class that accumulates wealth by dispossessing (Harvey 2005) masses of people. These technologies, which require a high level of State intervention (Foucault 2008) so as to create a legal and cultural framework to allow for the free market to operate, were introduced in Argentina through the 1976-1983 dictatorship that disappeared 30,000 activists who had previously opposed this economic and cultural model. Their defeat paved the way for the destruction of the national industry twenty years later, with its consequent massive impoverishment and unemployment.

Neoliberal practices had gendered effects on the population, creating a "feminization of poverty", as women were heads of the approximately 20 percent of households with children and a single parent, at a time when more than 50 percent of the female population lived below the poverty line (SIEMPRO: Sistema de Evaluación 2003). This feminization of poverty was encountered with a "feminization of resistance" because women participated in the organization and execution of hundreds of direct actions, including "puebladas" and road blockades that could last for several days. However, the novel presence of women in the direct actions did not translate into full-

blown women's leadership. Although women do hold leadership roles within these movements, these are for the most part confined to the sphere of the "domestic" aspects of movement life, while men monopolize the more prestigious role of public speakers.

I focus on the organizing strategies and tactics developed by social movements within the field of politics by other means. In this field, prefigurative social movements organize through the principle of power-with (Ferguson 2009), the power to build community as opposed to the power to dominate others. These constructions of power-with are fostered and allowed by movements that privilege performances of radical, non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities, characterized by a soft, non-relenting, peaceful —though at the same time contentious— activism that permeates the public spheres. Women gain prestige in these organizations in a number of ways, most prominently through economic and social empowerment derived from solidarity economic projects, the PPs. The PPs were conceived as a way for impoverished middle classes and working class unemployed workers to generate autonomous sources of income, as they learned new skills and built alternative economic practices outside of the exploitative logic of capitalist enterprises (Gibson-Graham 2006). I argue that the PPs, and the subjectivities that were produced through these structures, constituted unintended consequences of neoliberalism. Indeed, the PPs were created through a manipulation of the modest stipend that neoliberal welfare/work plans supplied, implemented with the support of the World Bank. Within the PPs women gained economic power and social prestige through their capacity to build community by establishing and maintaining connections with fellow activists and other social movements. In this way, social

movement's capacities were increased by the opening of political spaces for the participation of other kindred movements.

The appearance of this field obeys to a number of factors. On a structural level, as the manufacturing industry lost its privileged status within capitalism, social movements began organizing in multiclass groupings that could elaborate on their own political projects, a strategy that leftist political parties had eschewed in the past. While the industrial proletariat was envisioned as the privileged subject of social change, leftist revolutionary parties predicated that the middle classes should submit to the program of the proletariat, embodied in the vanguard of the revolution, the democratically centralized revolutionary party. As neoliberalism produced an ethnicized, gendered, and uneven (Ong 2006) proletarianization of the whole of society (Hardt 2000), social movements responded by creating multiclass organizations with their own prefigurative political programs. These structural conditions were assessed by activists through subjective factors, including most prominently the distrust that citizens felt toward the State, decoded during the 1976-1983 dictatorship as an apparatus of terror that far from protecting its citizens, devoured many of them in the horrid torture camps that were spread throughout the country. This generalized distrust of the State was compounded during the democratic period that followed the dictatorship, as the implementation of the IMF structural adjustment plans required that the local governments act as managers of the IMF, forcing the population into unheard of poverty and unemployment. Moreover, political parties and unions proved ineffectual in the early nineties during the mobilizations against the structural adjustment plans, all of which led to a profound distrust of representation and hierarchical politics, which culminated in 2001 with masses

of people mobilizing in a seemingly spontaneous manner, demanding that "all of them go", the IMF, the corrupt local governments, politicians, and the sold-out Supreme Court.

The fall of the another hierarchical institution, the Soviet Union, contributed as well to the articulation of a critique of hierarchy and representation that led many ex-Trotskyist, Communists, Guevarists and others to pay attention to the non-hierarchical, horizontal constructions of the Zapatistas in Chiapas. However, in contrast with the indigenous uprising in the mountains of the south of Mexico, in Argentina autonomist and autonomous organizations bloomed mainly in urban environments. Starting with "puebladas" and road blocks organized by unemployed workers in the mid nineties, by 2002, following the days of rage that toppled four presidents in 2001, an important number of popular assemblies developed non-hierarchical, rhizomatic connections with unemployed workers, and, as factories were recovered and put back into production, a whole uneven, diverse, and prefigurative field was constituted.

In this field, social movements articulated their private lives in the public spheres, as feminism was popularized, or sidestreamed (Alvarez 2009) through the participation of unemployed women in the annual "Encuentro Nacional de Mujeres". The "Encuentros"', organized in egalitarian non-hierarchical fashion, have a similar power structure to that of these social movements. Although the "Encuentros" were not spaces were social movement's internal power structures were discussed, the egalitarian exchanges and interactions with middle class and working class women in similar and different situations, from different political sectors of society, contributed to denaturalize cultural processes that were oppressing these women, as in partner's abusive behaviors and the gendered division of labor that relegated them to the reproductive aspects of life.

Responding to a number of subjective and objective factors, including a deep disillusion with electoral politics, with the liberal State, with State oriented organizations, churches, unions and political parties, these social movements are not aimed at State power. Rather, they engage in democratic constructions of power that deeply contrast with the leftist democratically centralized movements where most of the "referentes" of the field were trained into politics. Their prefigurative structures foster, as well, the development of politics of affection, that inform not only the PPs of the unemployed workers and middle-class activists, but also the recovered factories, where care for the workers is guided by the radical solidarity principle of justice (Ferguson 2008) , which ensures that all workers are taken care of by the community in their times of need, at the same time that all members are expected to contribute to the success of the organization according to their own capacities.

Although these movements exhibit levels of gender balance absent in the democratically centralized organizations where many of these activists had been organizing in the past, there are still areas that need attention. For the most part, public speech is still voiced by men. Although feminist men encourage women to talk more with the media, seldom are women voices heard in public. While men hold the prestigious role of the spokesperson, women confine themselves to domestic social movement duties, such as managing the welfare plans, guaranteeing supplies, elaborating contact sheets and other non-prestigious, but necessary tasks. In this way, women, performing emphasized femininity[clxxi], conscious or unconsciously respond to male dominated processes in Argentina that privilege men's communications, allowing, in this way, for the public spheres to appear as embodied in males only. As some older women

with activist experience, many younger women and feminist men are aware of this issue, it is possible that in the near future women will realize the importance of having their voices heard, so that the public spheres represented through the media do not exclude femininities. In the meantime, communication within the organizations is mainly embodied in radical, non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities. However, other masculinities and femininities never completely lost ground within the organizations, and in times of strife and distress, leftist macho hegemonic masculinities and femininities imposed, through violence, their domination over movements, contributing in great measure to violent intra-movement fights and splits. However, the movements within field of politics by other means presented a serious challenge to neoliberalism by creating a space of economic solidarity and practices of direct democracy. Although not perfect, and in some cases short-lived, this space's democratic ensemble constituted a step forward when compared to the lack of internal democracy that permeated the popular organizations of Latin America during the seventies (Stahler-Sholk et al. 2008).

Theoretical Contributions

I am indexing to neoliberal politics and practices as those responsible for the weakening of democratic institutions in Argentina by identifying the conditions that led to the appearance of a field of politics and protest that eschews of traditional protesting venues. My contributions can be envisioned under the fields of multidisciplinary research, methodology, and women's activism in the study of neoliberalism, governmentality, social movements, and gender studies. .

I am making a contribution to studies of the governmental techniques implemented to establish neoliberalism by framing the collective empowerment of women in egalitarian organizations as an unintended consequence of neoliberalism. Thus, my research goes beyond outlining the deteriorating living conditions of the Argentine population after the IMF's structural adjustment plans were implemented, as I provide ethnographic data on women's struggles and strategies in creating and sustaining non-hierarchical rhizomatic connections with each other and with similarly oriented social movements. In this way, I show the different ways in which women engaged to challenge neoliberal governmentality, as they established long term, national and international connections that helped them in the process of defeating governmental aims of isolating them from others in the same predicament. Far from complying with welfare/work program guidelines oriented to keep them busy working on activities that did not benefit their communities, the unemployed worker sector of this field created instead non-hierarchical solidarity economy projects that greatly contributed to women's collective empowerment. Similarly, middle class women also created enterprises that allowed them to produce their material lives through non-capitalist relations of production (Gibson-Graham 2006). Middle class women engaged, as well, in other ways of contesting neoliberalism, as they united to struggle against open-air mining projects in the Andes and against pulp mills on the Uruguay River.

I am making a contribution to the studies of gender and social movement theory by identifying and describing how radical, non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities can contribute to the creation of egalitarian social movements. Through scholarly research combining masculinities and gender studies with social movement

theory I have created a theoretical framework that allows me to suggest that social movements that have prefigurative characteristics have the capacity to create non-aggressive, non-hegemonizing power structures, which in turn create the conditions for more democratic and gender balanced social movements. Given the lack of internal democracy of popular organizations in Latin American during the seventies, these movements' advance toward democratic power structures is an important factor to take into account.

My reflections on academic methods to study social movements contributes with cutting edge theorizations on the complexities of north-south research, especially in connection with feminist methodologies' potential for manipulation and exploitation. I argue that it is not enough for feminist researchers to befriend and be respectful of their subjects on all stages of their research, but that in order to address the issues of representation that plague the relationship between US based researchers and women in the Global South, all efforts should be made to bring these social actors to present their own subjugated knowledges at professional associations and universities in the Global North. A careful selection of those who travel will contribute not only to addressing the issue of representation, but also will greatly benefit students and scholars who can learn from these actors' experiences first hand. Furthermore, allowing for our subjects to present themselves in our own academic environments, will not only legitimize our own research, but will, at the same time, contribute to enhance their prestige back home, where the battle over internal gender balance, as well as the survival and success of social movements takes place.

Finally, I contribute to women's activism by establishing a connection between leftist macho hegemonic masculinity, hierarchical organizations and State power, by contrasting democratically centralized leftist parties with prefigurative social movements. At the same time that I identify these prefigurative movements as spaces for the development of non-hegemonizing, radical performances of femininities and masculinities, I suggest that the disputes and splits that plague social movements and leftist political parties are at least partially the result of the competitive, ego driven performances of leftist macho hegemonic masculinity. Although there is work to be done in the arena of women's leadership, I oppose these practices to those of prefigurative social movements that can function as spaces where women can access with more ease non-oppressive leadership roles, even though the male monopoly of the public word is still an important issue to overcome.

Open Lines for Future Research

I think my main contribution has been that of establishing a field of politics by other means, embodied in prefigurative social movements which appeared in Argentina not only due to the changes in the mode of production that demoted the industrial proletariat as the privileged subject of the revolution, but also as a result of activists' critique of hierarchical structures such as the State and the Soviet Union, as they acknowledged the influence of Zapatismo on contemporary organizing strategies. However, it would be important to document further the sidestreaming and the mainstreaming of feminism over the field of politics by other means, by analyzing the participation of women from this field in the "Encuentros". How have the "Encuentros" changed through the participation of women from popular classes? What were the new

concerns introduced by these women? What have these women taken back to their movements? My preliminary research on the "Encuentro" suggests that perhaps due to the tension generated between the different political parties, social movements and the Catholic Church, the "Encuentro" has turned into a space of great competition among the women who are militants of different organizations. This might have not generated the kind of climate that would favor sharing their own organizations' weaknesses regarding, precisely, gender balance (Alma and Lorenzo 2009). This notion is reinforced by the fact that, for the most part, the women I interviewed refused to admit there were gender imbalances in their organizations. They were eager to find a diverse range of excuses to justify why, for example, it was men who always talked with the media, or why it was, for the most part, women who were cooking while men sat around talking politics with visiting international activists. But even if the "Encuentros" might not necessarily be spaces were women would openly discuss these weaknesses, the "Encuentros" still influenced the way women think and act about power. Although the Catholic Church, local governments, and political parties have manipulated the "Encuentros'" agenda and programs (Alma and Lorenzo 2009), this massive event is nevertheless non-hierarchical, and non-representational. How have women articulated these experiences of non-hierarchy and direct democracy in their own social movements? To what extent can their participation in the "Encuentros" generate increased leadership in Argentine social movements?

It would also be interesting to research other countries where similar social movements have developed. Although it is clear to me that a similar field exists in Mexico, embodied in the Zapatistas, I believe that such a field might exist in Bolivia as

well, since this country had similar experiences with neoliberalism, through dictatorships and democratic governments, as well as powerful social movements that led struggles against the privatization of water and the exploitation of gas. How does the field politics by other means present itself in a country with powerful urban and indigenous social movements in a context of patriarchal domination, as Mujeres Creando[clxxii] reminds us? How do the neighborhood councils in El Alto and La Paz, for example, articulate ethnic claims with women's gender issues (Monasteiros P. 2007)? Are their power structures rhizomatically constituted? To what extent do they resemble the radical, non-hegemonizing performances of political femininities and masculinities of the Argentine social movements within this field?

Social and Political Significance of this Research

This research is significant for populations worldwide who struggle against neoliberal practices and policies and to scholars who research the impact of these policies, particularly on women. It points to neoliberalism as the main cause of the weakening of the institutions of democracy, at the same time that it shows that women and men can work together toward changing their structural situation. Furthermore, it indexes to a struggle that can happen at the same time that women collectively empower themselves. It demonstrates that it is not necessary to wait for after the revolution in order for women to assert their gender interests. Moreover, it suggests that prefigurative social movements, concerned with gender balance and women's empowerment, are suitable spaces for performances of power-with that allow these movements to connect with each other through egalitarian rhizomatic connections. In this way, activists, spaces for resistance and new meanings can be shared in non-cooptive ways, as the field of

politics by other means engages in performances of radical non-hegemonizing political femininities and masculinities that through creative, daring, and bold direct actions were able to challenge neoliberalism as they took care of their constituencies' most dire needs. May their struggle show the possibility of democratic, gender-balanced ways to achieve social change to populations both in the Global North and in the Global South whose lives have been negatively touched by neoliberalism.

Notes

[clxix] My analysis of neoliberalism was developed through my participation in Julie Hemment's 2007 seminar at the Anthropology Department at Umass, and later through the *Social Movements and 21st Century Cultural-Political Transformations***,** especially through Niall Stephen's research of the stages of neoliberalism.

[clxx] In the context of defining the social constitution of gender, Judith Butler defines performances as "stylized repetition of acts". These acts are embodied in "gestures, movement, and enactments" that, repeated throughout time, produce the illusion of an "abiding gendered self" (Butler 1988).

[clxxi] R.W.Connell terms performances by women that contribute to sediment men's dominance as "emphasized femininity" (Connell 1987). These women's performances constitute an example of "emphasized femininity", at least in relation to re-defining the gender of the public spheres as they implicitly accept men's dominance in the prestigious role of addressing others in public.

[clxxii] www.mujerescreado.org

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